THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENTS

J. W. DIGGLE, D.D.
BISHOP OF CARLISLE

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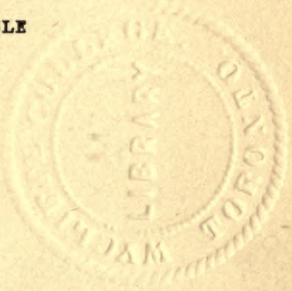

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I

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENTS

THERE are few notes of the character of a Christian Church and of its real relation to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ more clear and unmistakable than the value which it attaches to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. In all the Churches this value is esteemed inestimable and beyond all reckoning. No true Church and no true Christian can depreciate either the one ministry or the other. All are practically agreed upon the necessity of both ministrations, as well as upon their inculcation by Christ Himself, their historic catholicity, and the power which, through the Holy Ghost, they have exercised in the vivification, the edification, and the nourishment of the faithful in all ages.

But while all Churches are agreed upon the priceless value of both the Word and the Sacraments of the Gospel, there is a quite vast divergence of opinion as to their relative value. Some

Churches overestimate the Word in relation to the Sacraments; others overestimate the Sacraments in relation to the Word. Some underrate the ministry of preaching, others the ministry of the Sacraments. In some the sacramental ministry overtops the prophetic ministry; in others the prophetic overshadows the sacramental. In the Church of England, with which I am now chiefly concerned, neither ministry is overshadowed or overtopped by the other; both receive, in loyalty to Holy Scripture, their due and full recognition. At the same time, the authorized formularies of the Church of England leave no room for doubt to which of these two ministrations precedence is given. Quite distinctly, and without possibility of doubt, the Church of England places the ministry of the Word before that of the Sacraments. Wherever in the Prayer Book the phrase "the ministry of the Word and Sacraments" is used, the Word always comes first, the Sacraments second. Nowhere is this order reversed. When a man is ordained to the diaconate, a New Testament is delivered to him by the Bishop, saying: "Take thou authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself." Part of the functions assigned to him is "the assisting of the

priest in Divine service, and especially when he ministereth the Holy Communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof, and, in the absence of the priest, to baptize infants." But the stress of the whole office for the Ordering of Deacons is laid on the ministry of the Word. Except in the instances just referred to, the ministry of the Sacraments is not mentioned, whereas that of the Word is again and again emphasized. No man, says the Preface, is to be admitted to the office of deacon unless he be "sufficiently instructed in Holy Scripture." He is to be replenished with the truth of Christ's doctrine. He is to give himself continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word. One test of the worth of his ministry, as of that of St. Stephen, is the increase of the Word of God. He is solemnly interrogated as to his unfeigned faith in the Canonical Scriptures, and is pledged diligently to read the same unto the people, as well as to frame and fashion his life and that of his family (the possibility of his being married being postulated) according to the doctrine of Christ. His special commission is to read and preach the Gospel. In studying this office, either by itself as a separate document or in its historical relation to the unreformed offices preceding it, no one can fail to realize the relative weight attached by the reformed Church of

England to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments respectively.

Similarly with the Ordering of Priests. The same proportion is here maintained as in the Ordering of Deacons. Priests are to be replenished with the truth of Christ's doctrine for the edification of His Church. In the Epistle chosen for the Ordinal the title " priest " does not occur, as, indeed, it occurs nowhere in the New Testament as a distinctive designation of Christ's ministers. But the ordinand priest is reminded in the Epistle of the early titles of the ministers of Christ's Gospel. Some were apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. And the work of the ministry of all, whatever their title, was the building up of the Body of Christ in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. The dignity and excellency of the priest's office is declared especially to be " to teach and to feed the Lord's family." And forasmuch as the doing of so weighty a work cannot be compassed except with doctrine and exhortation taken out of Holy Scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same, the ordinand priest is most earnestly admonished " how studious he ought to be in reading and learning the Scriptures." The means whereby he may wax riper and stronger in his ministry,

he is told by the ordaining Bishop, is "by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, and by continual prayer to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost." Not a word is said in this charge to the ordinands of either of the two Sacraments of the Gospel, the omission being due, as we shall presently see, not to any disparagement of these Sacraments, but to the Church's clear and definite determination to give precedence, both in order and value, to the ministry of the Word.

Next after the Bishop's solemn charge in the Ordinal comes the solemn questioning of the ordinands. Here also the Church of England follows the same line, still further emphasizing the ministry of the Word before proceeding to make any mention of the Sacraments. "Are you persuaded," asks the Bishop, "that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined, out of the said Scriptures, to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture?" To which the solemn reply is rendered: "I am so

persuaded, and have so determined by God's help." Again: "Will you be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word? . . . Will you be diligent in prayers, and in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same?" And again the like answer in the form of solemn adjuration and sacred oath. What could be more manifest than that the reading of Scripture, the study of Scripture, the teaching of Scripture, loyalty to Scripture, and obedience to Scripture, are the prime and principal obligation of every priest of the Church of England, according to the solemn promises made at his ordination? However important and worthful other functions of his office may be, all are second and subsidiary to this. In the Church of England prophetic duties are the first and most obligatory of the priest's vocation. No evidence could attest more definitely and more convincingly what the Church of England means by the term "priest." She never means by "priest" a sacerdotal officer, a hierarch, a sacrificing agent. In all her formularies the term is used either in contradistinction to that of deacon or bishop, or else as equivalent to presbyter—i.e., elder or minister—whose paramount and permanent vocation is the proclama-

tion of the Word. This Word is the key to the kingdom of heaven. By the key of this Word the kingdom of heaven is opened or closed. No other key can fit the lock of the heavenly gate. The Word on earth is the revelation of the Will in heaven; so that whatsoever this Word of God, this Holy Scripture, shall loose on earth is loosed in heaven, and whatsoever this Word on earth shall bind in heaven is also bound. Never according to the will and commandments of men, but always according to the will and revelation of God, do binding and loosing proceed.

Not until these great truths have been set forth unmistakably does the Ordinal make any mention of the Holy Sacraments. Thus in the Church of England the ministry of the Sacraments is conditioned by, and made dependent on, the ministry of the Word. The faithful dispenser of Christ's Sacraments must first be a faithful dispenser of Christ's Gospel. None but faithful dispensers of the Word can be faithful dispensers of the Sacraments. Not, indeed, that the validity of the Sacraments depends either on the fidelity of the dispenser or on the lineage of his ordination. Such a supposition would make the Sacraments to be the Sacraments of men, or the Sacraments of a Church—poor things verily—whereas in truth they are Sacraments of the Blessed God Himself,

divine ordinances, grand and glorious beyond all computation. But it is the Word—the Incarnate Word revealed in the Written Word—within the Sacraments which imparts to them their power and splendour. Take away the Word and what are the Sacraments? A house without foundation, a body without a soul, a well without water, a husk without a kernel, a sign without meaning, an instrument without force. Apart from Christ the Sacraments are nothing. With Christ, in Christ, through Christ, they are great and strong. And Christ is infinite mercy, boundless love. He will not, therefore, suffer His Sacraments to be deprived of their efficacy or defrauded of their power by the unfaithfulness of their dispenser. So long as the recipient is faithful, Christ will sacramentally bless. The infidelity of the dispenser will surely recoil as a curse on himself, but will neither kill the Sacrament nor rob the faithful of its benediction. Where both dispenser and receiver are faithless a Sacrament is the condemnation of both. Where the dispenser is faithful and the receiver faithless the administration is worthy and acceptable to God, the reception unworthy and charged with doom. Where dispenser and receiver alike are faithful there is unsearchable blessing for both. But it is always the Christ Himself from whom the blessing flows

upon the faith, whether of recipient or dispenser ; and the Sacrament is the sacred pledge of that blessing, the Divinely appointed channel through which it descends. Thus it is the very height of the supremacy of the Sacraments, the crown of their glory, that they should be attached dependently, yet vitally, to the Holy Scriptures which reveal the Christ. Far from being a weakness to the Sacraments that they are secondary to the Holy Scriptures, their dependence on those Scriptures is one source of their strength. Put the ministry of the Sacraments first and that of the Word second, and both lose part of their meaning and forfeit much of their power. It is only when the Sacraments are built upon the Word, and the Word assigns their authority to the Sacraments, that the Sacraments become not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but also certain witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us.

And as with the Sacraments, so also with the assurance of pardon. No priest can pardon sins committed against others ; for none can pardon an offence save those against whom the offence has been committed. A cannot blot out the sins against B, nor B the sins against A. This is true of all kinds and degrees of transgression. A crime against the State can only be pardoned by

the State ; a trespass against a community, whether ecclesiastical or civil, can be remitted only by the community ; an injury to an individual can only be forgiven by the individual injured ; a sin against God, God alone can forgive. Sometimes an evil word or deed is a compound of evils, being at once a crime, an injury, and a sin. Then in as far as it is a sin, God alone can forgive it ; in as far as it is a trespass or a crime, only the community ; in as far as it is individual injury, only the person injured. But in no case can an extraneous party, an outside person, forgive a wrong.

Often, indeed, the forgiveness is transmitted through a channel appointed for that purpose, as when the penalty for a crime is remitted through a Secretary of State, or the pardon of an injury conveyed through the agency of an intermediary friend. But whether effected mediately or immediately, the sole authority and power to forgive rests only with those against whom the wrong has been done. So is it with sin. God alone can forgive sins. But authority and power to convey and announce God's forgiveness are sometimes delegated to others. Thus Nathan, who was a prophet and not a priest, was authorized to proclaim God's pardon to contrite David ; thus also hath God given power and commandment to His

ministers to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. And, like Nathan, this they do in their capacity of prophets rather than priests. But it is God Himself, and God alone, who pardoneth and absolveth the truly penitent and unfeignedly believing sinner. All that God's ministers can do—yet this is much in the way of comfort and assurance—is to proclaim God's pardon and transmit His absolution.

But on what grounds, we ask, can God's ministers claim their grand prerogative to discharge this sacred function of proclaiming pardon, this blessed right of assuring peace to broken, contrite, believing hearts? Clearly not on the ground of their ordination alone. Of itself and by itself ordination cannot possibly confer such momentous powers, such glorious privileges. To contend for this would be to contend for an absurdity, which might easily degenerate—has, indeed, not seldom actually degenerated—into an infamy. Often in the Church's history ordained ecclesiastics have blessed those whom God hath not blessed and cursed those whom God hath not cursed. Ordained ecclesiastics blessed the Inquisitors and cursed their victims. Does anybody, not a bigot, suppose these bessings and curses were ratified in heaven? Ordained ecclesiastics decreed the

decisions of the Council of Trent. According to these decrees a large part of Christendom, and that not the least intelligent or the least spiritual part, is still smitten with anathema. What man outside the Church of Rome deems these anathemas to be anything else but sounding brass or boltless ecclesiastical thunder? We know for certain that God has not confirmed these anathemas in heaven, inasmuch as He is constantly pouring down ever-increasing benedictions on the anathematized.

Or to take another instance: A young man may be ordained to the priesthood in the Church of England at twenty-four years of age. At such an age his knowledge, whether of the ways of God or the ways of men, is probably not extensive. He could easily be deceived by a false and emotional penitence, easily diverted into a cold frame of mind by stammering and reserved, albeit an entirely sincere, contrition. In the former case he looses the sin; in the latter he binds it, owing to his inaptitude for spiritual diagnosis. Who will say that such a priest's blundering is ratified in heaven? Such a contention would be an insult to heaven; as we know, it rightly is a butt of scorn on earth. Even rigorous sacerdotalists perceive this peril, and make confessors only of men of mature age and ripe experience. But if

the power to loose and bind be a matter of ordination only, a virtue inherent in the priestly office, why this precaution? A priest is as much a priest at twenty-four years of age as at forty-two, and if his authority to forgive and remit is an unconditioned attribute of his ordination, it is just as valid in the callow, fledgeling priest as in the priest of full-grown knowledge and discerning wisdom.

The Church of England nowhere in her authentic formularies professes to confer such unconditioned powers on her priests. She does not interpret the sayings of her Lord after the manner of the scribes and Pharisees, who through their traditions made the Word of God of none effect. Her Lord is the Word of God, the Divine Logos, the Reason of God. To interpret His sayings irrationally is to sin against the Divine Reason. The Gospel is not a letter, but a spirit; not an edict, but a revelation. Christ said He was a Door, a Vine, that His Body was bread, and that wine was His Blood. There is no difficulty whatever in understanding what He Himself meant by these sayings. In themselves they are as bright and clear as the Light of the World could make them. There was no darkness, no doubt of any kind, in the minds of the first disciples of the Lord as to the heavenly revelations conveyed in

these utterances. To them these sayings were as a lamp on a lamp-stand. It was the scribes and the Pharisees, the priests and rabbis, who put the lamp under a bed of obscurities, under a bushel of literalisms. In contempt they first asked the question, "Will this man give us His flesh to eat?" Centuries afterwards superstition caught up the literalist cry, and proclaimed, amid clouds of baseless metaphysic and delusive rhetoric, "We can give this Man's flesh for men to eat"; thus affording another illustration of the universal law that literalism in religion always drags superstition at its heels.

Similarly with the grand commission of the ministry of forgiveness. The literal interpretation of that commission may, as we have seen, lead men to conclusions revolting to reason and religion alike. How does this commission run? "Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." Taken literally, what do these words come to? To this: That a priest is a giver or withholder of Divine forgiveness; that heaven is bound to bind what is bound on earth, and to loose what on earth is loosed. This literal sense is the complete reversal of both reason and revelation. It places the will of God at the disposition of men, the mercy of God at the control of the mercy of men.

It turns the Lord's Prayer upside down, proclaiming that the will of heaven is to be governed by the will of earth, and that God is to forgive where and when man chooses. Even Balaam knew better than this. He acknowledged his incapacity to bless unless in accordance with the blessing of God, or to curse without God's consent. It is so still. No priest can bind where God hath loosed, or loose where God hath bound. God is the only binder, the only looser, the only forgiver, the only retainer, of the sins of men. All that the priest can do is to declare who they are whose sins God has revealed He will remit, and who they are whose sins He has determined to retain.

But how can the priest know the mind and will of God in respect of forgiveness ? He has no other possible means of knowing these things except from Holy Scripture. The ways of God are not as man's ways, nor His mind as man's mind, nor His will as man's will. High as heaven is above earth, so high are the thoughts of God above the thoughts of man. It is only on the wings of revelation that man can soar to the heights of God's mercy : only by prayer in the Holy Ghost that he can learn the depths of heavenly truth. His priestly efficiency is, therefore, in direct proportion to his knowledge of Holy Scripture and his growth in spiritual discernment. The personal ab-

solution of an ignorant, prayerless priest is a worthless absolution. He knows nothing of the will of God, nothing of the mercy of God; whatever, therefore, he declares about forgiveness is in no wise to be depended upon: it has neither force nor value. The mere enlistment of a soldier does not fit him to direct wars, to win victories or avert defeats. So the ordination of a priest does not of itself give the heavenly wisdom essential to absolution. The effective ministry of personal pardon is conditioned by the minister's knowledge and experience of the Word of God.

The Church of England makes this fact clear throughout her formularies. Learning and godly conversation she exalts into the place of a principal aptitude for the ministry, and learning she defines to be such studies as help to the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Absolution, she teaches, is conditioned by repentance according to the Holy Gospel, and remission by unfeigned faith in the same Gospel. Hence the supreme importance of the people, as well as the priests, learning the Holy Scriptures, that they may know both whether their penitence and faith, as well as his absolution and remission, are in harmony with the Gospel. If a sinner is disquieted in conscience and requires comfort or counsel, he is instructed by the Church of England to go to some discreet

and learned minister of God's Word and open his grief, that by the ministry of God's Holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution. But what if the minister be not discreet ?—i.e., not a man of spiritual discernment—what if he be not a learned minister of God's Word ? Clearly the disquieted sinner can get no trustworthy counsel, no solid comfort, from such a man. He is a broken reed, an empty cistern. You might as well go to a doctor who knows nothing of medicine, nothing of surgery, nothing of the human frame, as to an unlearned and undiscerning priest who does not know his Bible and the heart of man. It is by the ministry of God's Word, proclaims the Church of England, that the benefit of absolution is conveyed and received. But the ministry of God's Word, and therefore the benefit of absolution also, must be greatly affected by the minister's knowledge and skill in that Word, just as a doctor's prescription is affected by his skill in medicine. The more ignorant the minister, the less trustworthy his counsel ; the more learned and more godly the minister, the stronger and more sure his promise of absolution.

It is sometimes alleged that it is not the priest who absolves, but the Church behind the priest; and therefore the validity of the absolution depends, not on the knowledge and illumination of

the priest, but on the power and authority of the Church. Let us take this for granted, and what follows? First, that even a Church cannot bind what God has not bound or loose what God has not loosed, else would that Church be stronger and more powerful than God. Secondly, seeing that a Church can only bind and loose in accordance with the will of God; seeing also that Churches, like individuals, are dependent for their knowledge of that will upon revelation, and that Scripture is the clearest and fullest of all revelations, then it must needs be that those Churches are the best authorities for absolution whose doctrine and discipline are in closest accord with Scripture, and that no Church that does not teach and minister agreeably to the supreme authority of Scripture has any claim to spiritual authority at all. Thirdly, seeing that God the Holy Ghost is the Inspirer of Scriptural revelation, seeing also that God cannot contradict Himself, any Church doctrine or discipline not in harmony with Scripture cannot be a doctrine or discipline from the Holy Ghost. Fourthly, seeing that the test of doctrine and discipline for all Churches alike is their accord and concord with Holy Scripture, it is the manifest duty of all true Churches to demand from their clergy a good knowledge of Holy Scripture as a preliminary to their ordination, together with the

solemn pledge that throughout their whole life they will make the ever-growing, ever-deepening knowledge of Holy Scripture their chief and permanent concern. If, then, only Scriptural Churches are trustworthy Churches, it clearly follows that only Scriptural ministers can teach the mind of trustworthy Churches. Ignorant ministers may easily, without knowing it, teach contrary to the mind of their Church and the mind of God both in reference to absolution and other things; and, therefore, the Church's duty to the minister, as well as the minister's duty to the Church, requires for the sanity and effectiveness of his ministry a profound and spiritual knowledge of the Scriptures. Scriptural ministers are as needful to the exercise of the authority of Scriptural Churches as the Word of God is necessary to the validity of that authority. In reference to absolution, therefore, the matter stands thus: Whether the authority for the absolution be deemed the individual priest or the collective Church, it is indispensable in both cases alike that the authority behind both should be God Himself. And as it is only by the searching of the Scriptures that we can know whether an absolution has God behind it or not, the searching of the Scriptures is a paramount obligation for both absolvers and absolved.

Thus the position of the Church of England

is altogether unmistakable in respect both to Sacraments and discipline. The doctrine of Christ is her rule in all things. She allows neither Sacraments nor discipline to be ministered except as the Lord hath commanded. And this is the Lord's commandment concerning absolution : that if men forgive, they are forgiven ; if they forgive not, neither can they be forgiven. This commandment, together with other commandments concerning forgiveness taken out of Holy Scripture, the priest is to declare. Such declaration is one of the main purposes of his ordination. Publicly he is to preach it with all the authority that his commission, his knowledge, his experience can combine to confer. Privately he is to tell it, without scruple or doubtfulness, to disquieted penitents. At the dying bed he is to proclaim with no uncertain sound, but with all the power derived to the Church from Jesus Christ her Lord—a great and living power so long as the Church abides in Christ, but apart from Him a withered, lifeless impotence—that to the truly believing, the truly penitent, the truly charitable, those who make amends to those they have injured, and from the bottom of their hearts forgive those who have offended them, there is certain forgiveness, unquestionable absolution—the Father's kiss, the best robe, the Father's ring.

We see, then, that neither the discipline nor the Sacraments of the Gospel may be ministered in the Church of England otherwise than God's Word doth allow. The dispensing of the Word takes precedence of the Sacraments. Neither in Holy Scripture nor in the formularies of the Church of England does the second ever usurp the place of the first, or the first resign its position to the second. In the Ordering of Priests the Bishop delivers a Bible into the hand of the ordinee, but neither paten nor chalice, as in some communions, and as in the Church of England in her medieval, sacerdotal age. At the Reformation the Church of England broke away from this, as from some other similar ecclesiastical erroneous customs. And why did she thus break herself free from them? Not through any disparagement of the Sacraments of the Gospel. No one who knows the Church of England—her historic sense; her Apostolic continuity; her devotion to whatsoever things are beautiful, just, reverent, and true—can cast at her any such false accusation as this. No, the Church of England is a sacramental Church—not primarily, because the Sacraments are not the prime things in Scripture, but deeply, truthfully, reverentially, and according to Divine proportion. It is because of her reverence for the Sacraments and the Divine Author

and Giver of the Sacraments that she keeps them in their proper place—the place which the Lord and His Apostles assigned to them.

The New Testament is perfectly explicit as to the due and rightful position of the Sacraments in the economy of the Gospel. The ministry of the Lord is characteristically a ministry of the Word. The Lord Himself was baptized, but Himself never baptized. He did not even institute the Christian Sacrament of Baptism (a sign of new birth, an instrument for grafting into the Church, a pledge and witness of initiation into Christian discipleship) until after his Resurrection. The Sacrament of His Holy Supper He did not ordain till the eve of His great Passion and redeeming death. All the remainder of His ministry on earth was devoted to the Word—i.e., the declaration and unfolding of the power and justice, the righteousness and love, the goodness and severity, the will and purpose, the sovereign mercy and infinite care, the essential mind and fatherly heart, of God. By example, by action, in conversation and conduct, in private talk with His disciples, in public preaching in the synagogue, by the seaside, and on mountain tops—anywhere, everywhere, and always—this was His grand mission, the burden of His ministry: to teach men the things concerning the kingdom of

God, to show men the Father. His characteristic title among His contemporaries was "Teacher." By no other term is He so frequently designated in the narratives of the Evangelists as this. He Himself gloried in the designation. "Ye call Me Teacher and Lord," He said, "and so I am." Teaching, like redeeming, was of the main substance of His ministry.

When we pass to the Apostolic age, the same proportion between the Word and Sacraments of the Gospel is maintained. "Christ sent me not," says St. Paul, "to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." So tremendous was his inspired dread of the over-sacramentalizing tendencies of his age, that he once actually cried out in thanksgiving to God for the fewness of the baptisms he had administered. Of all his converts, he seems to have baptized only Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanas. In his Epistles the Holy Communion is only mentioned twice: once for the double purpose of emphasizing the unity of the faithful (all being partakers of the one bread),[1] and of warning Christian communicants against the perils of idolatry. The cup of the Lord, he says, is not to be confounded with the cup which Gentiles drink to demons. The Lord's table is

[1] 1 Cor. x. 16 et seq.

not to be confounded with the table of demons. In the Christian Communion all fellowship with either the spirit or practices of idolatry must be avoided, there being no congruity, but a complete antagonism, between the sacrifices offered to idols and the Communion of the body and blood of Christ. To emphasize this antagonism the Holy Ghost guided him against the use of any terms which might tend to abate it, and so he uses neither the term "sacrifice" nor "altar" in connexion with the Lord's Supper. Accustomed as he was from his earliest childhood to the use of these terms, both by the heathen around him and by the great Jewish Church of which he once had been so prominent and enthusiastic a member, he will adapt no such terms to the Christian feast. Israel after the flesh had sacrifices; Israel after the flesh had also a priestly altar; but Israel after the Spirit has, according to St. Paul's inspired choice of terms, neither priestly sacrifice nor priestly altar. How altogether different, how much more grand and holy, would have been the history of the Christian Church if she had been loyal to this inspired choice of terms, and had not reverted to the use of pagan and Jewish nomenclature—a nomenclature which has drawn a whole host of pagan notions and Jewish traditions in its train!

The second occasion on which St. Paul adverts to the Holy Communion occurs in the same Epistle as the first.[1] Here the purpose of the mention is principally to inculcate the solemnity of the Supper—the exceeding need of self-control, self-examination, and the utmost reverence in eating the bread and drinking the cup, lest, in coming together to eat, men should be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. The Communion, according to St. Paul, is intended for a remembrance of Christ, and as a visible witness through all the ages of His death till the very end of time—"till He come." Such an intention is sublime. Such a witness demands all the sanctity with which reverence can surround it, all the quietness and orderliness and seemliness which devotion can bestow. The necessity of this solemn and solemnizing spirit is the theme of St. Paul's second allusion to the Supper of the Lord. Nowhere else does he even refer to that Holy Supper. Neither is it referred to in any other part of the New Testament after the Gospels, except it be in the custom of the early Christians, who broke bread from house to house.

Now, what does this great reserve of the New Testament concerning the Sacraments mean?

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 20 et seq.

Does it mean that the writers of the New Testament were indifferent to the Sacraments—that they ignored and passed them by as unnecessary parts of the economy of the Gospel? Who that enters into their spirit and character, that appreciates their adoring love and loyalty to their Lord, can venture upon such a supposition? The words that Christ spake concerning the kingdom of God during the wondrous forty days of blessed converse between His Resurrection and Ascension must have sunk very deeply into their sensitive and devoted hearts. We have been permitted to know only a few of those sacred words, those Divine injunctions, but one of those injunctions has been left on record, either as an undisputed tradition or as part of the Canonical Scripture—the injunction which commands the disciples to go to all the nations, discipleing them by Baptism into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. How strongly and firmly this injunction had seized upon the minds of the Apostles is evident from St. Peter's mandate to the 3,000 converts on the Day of Pentecost. "Repent," he said, "and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Their Teacher's great saying to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and the

Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," was no secret to the Apostles. They knew it well. Their practice proves how deeply they cherished its significance. Christianity was for them a new creation for man, a new birth—a birth from above. The Christian is a twice-born man. Naturally he is born of the flesh, and is flesh ; spiritually he is born of the Spirit, and is spirit. And Baptism signified to them the instrument and seal of this new birth—this spiritual creation. Sometimes the Baptism followed the reception of the Holy Ghost, as in the instance of Cornelius and his company ;[1] then it was a seal. Sometimes it preceded that reception, as with the converts at Ephesus ; then it was an instrument. But in both instances the reception of Baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost are connected together : the heart was sprinkled from an evil conscience and the body washed with pure water. Baptism was no uncertain element in the teaching of St. Paul. " Know ye not," he asks, " that so many of us as are baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into His death ? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in

[1] Cf. Acts. x. 47, xix. 5, 6 ; Titus iii. 5 ; Heb. x. 22 ; Rom. vi. 3.

newness of life." Even the custom of Baptism for the dead [1] he did not condemn, but wove it into the great argument set forth in his First Epistle to the Corinthians for the truth of the Resurrection. For St. Paul Baptism meant the putting on of Christ.[2] Thus, although there is great reserve displayed about Baptism in the writings of the New Testament, and few allusions are made to it, yet those allusions are clear, definite, unmistakable, strong. The Apostles clearly recognized and firmly taught the ministry of Baptism, but they made that ministry secondary to—yea, dependent upon—the ministry of the Word. The Church, so they taught, can only be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word.[3] Apart from the Word the washing was nothing. No Church can be a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, unless the Word vitalizes the washing and the washing is in harmony with the Word. This Apostolic teaching is the true echo of their Master's doctrine and their Master's prayer : " Ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken to you." " Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy Word is truth." [4]

And as with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, so

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 29. [2] Calatl. iii. 27. [3] Eph. v. 26, 27.
[4] St. John xv. 3, xvii. 17.

also with the twin Sacrament of the Holy Communion. Here again there is great and striking reserve manifested in the Apostolic teachings—a reserve greater far than in reference to Baptism, a reserve amounting almost to silence. This most wonderful reserve is an astonishing note of the New Testament teachings. It cannot be unintentional, for it pervades the entire Canon. Outside the brief narratives of the three Synoptic Evangelists—there are not half a dozen references to the Holy Communion in all the New Testament Scriptures. St. John, the fourth Evangelist, the disciple whom Jesus loved, the disciple whose unique and blessed privilege it was to lean on the Lord's breast at the institution of the Supper, never mentions the details of that institution. Some New Testament scholars are, indeed, of opinion that in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel there is a kind of treatise on the Holy Communion. It is just possible, but scarcely probable, that this is so. And why? The word "flesh" is consistently used throughout that discourse, "body" never; whereas in each of the records of the institution of the Supper the word "body" is always used, not the word "flesh." Moreover, the conversation recorded in the sixth chapter of St. John took place some time previous to the institution, and it would be at least strange

—something, indeed, like a reversal of things—to expound and dilate upon an institution which as yet, in the course of the narrative, had not even been alluded to. Such an exegesis is anachronistic. Besides, if in his sixth chapter St. John had been conscious of any reference to the Supper, it is almost past believing that he would have omitted, somewhere in his Gospel, to record the circumstances of the institution itself. Like the other Evangelists, he records in detail the circumstances of the betrayal, the trial, the death, the resurrection of the Lord; but the Supper he barely and briefly mentions, and then only in connexion with the betrayal by Judas Iscariot and the very significant action of the Lord in washing the disciples' feet. This wondrous washing of the disciples' feet St. John relates in minute and copious detail, but not the institution of the Supper. The washing, together with the great saying, "Ye should do to others as I have done to you," seems to have made a singularly profound impression on St. John's mind. The unspeakable humility of the Son of God seems to have been for him a grander legacy to the Church even than the Sacrament of the Supper.

Again, in the sixth chapter of St. John neither of the fundamental words "remembrance" or "testament" occurs; whereas in all the four

accounts given of the institution one or another of these words is used with striking emphasis. And in the accounts given by St. Luke and St. Paul, not one alone, but both these terms are used with stress. Their omission by St. John is at least noteworthy, and deserving of serious consideration in the interpretation of the sixth chapter of his Gospel. Indeed, the best guide to the interpretation of the sixth chapter is the fourth chapter of the same Gospel. Both chapters are cast in the same mould. The conversations in both arise out of incidents related as immediately preceding and causing them. The crucial point in both chapters is the Messiahship of Jesus. It was a common tradition among the Jews that when Messias should come He would give them His flesh to eat. The phrase was familiar, and signified to their minds, accustomed, as all Orientals are, to the free and frequent use of imagery for the conveyance of great thoughts and spiritual truths, that the Messiah would impart at His coming His own great strength, His own great vigour, His own robustness to conquer, to the chosen race. The Jews had no difficulty whatever in understanding such expressions as " bread from heaven," " living water," " wells of water springing up into everlasting life "—bread whose nourishment should abolish hunger, and

water whose refreshment should abolish thirst—"flesh to eat and blood to drink." All these expressions were intelligible enough to them. They were commonplaces in reference to the Messiah. Their difficulty—the insuperable difficulty to many of them—was the appropriation of these expressions by Jesus to Himself. In the question, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" the stress of all the emphasis lies on the words "this man." No emphasis attaches to the words "his flesh." The stumbling-block, the rock of offence, the insurmountable incredibility was that "THIS man"—this Jesus of Nazareth, this carpenter's son, this man whose mother was a peasant woman, this obscure native of a mountain village from which no good thing had been known to come, this man whose brothers and sisters were quite ordinary people, this man despised by the religious aristocracy and rejected by the learned rabbis—that "THIS man," of all men should declare that he would give his flesh as bread for the life of the world, and his blood that men might live for ever: this indeed was a stone of stumbling, crushing Messianic hopes to powder. The appropriation of these expressions by Jesus to Himself meant nothing less than the claim to Messiahship. And so it came to pass that the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well acknowledged

Him as Messiah immediately after His promise to her of the living water which for ever quenches the thirst of men; and that Peter proclaimed Him as the Messiah, the Divine Messiah, the Son of God, immediately after His promise to give His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. In making these promises Jesus had Himself implicitly announced that He was Messiah, and it was the splendour of the Samaritan woman's believing privilege to be the first of the human race to accept and proclaim this announcement. As the Messiah was born of a woman, so by a woman was He first proclaimed. St. Peter was the second to proclaim Jesus as the Christ, and his proclamation went far beyond the first proclamation of the Samaritan woman, for he it was who, before all others, declared the Divinity of the Nazarene Messiah, the Christ of God. For this grand confession of the primal Christian faith —this heralding of the carpenter's son as the Son of God—Simon Bar-jonas was rewarded with the glorious title of Peter, the rock-man, the man who had revealed to the world the Messianic rock on which the Christian Church is built.

That rock is the Divinity of Jesus the Christ. The gates of hell can never prevail to break that rock. It is the rock of an eternal truth—the eternal truth which is the real key to the kingdom

of heaven. No man can truly understand the glorious Gospel of the blessed God apart from the Divinity of Jesus Christ. He may understand parts of it, such as the beauty of its teachings, the perfection of its morals, the loveliness and heroism of its Central Figure; but its whole is unintelligible if Jesus Christ be not first acknowledged as God. Apart from the Divinity of Jesus Christ, Gethsemane is a red injustice, the Cross a cruel infamy, the Resurrection no better than a legend, the visible Ascension a myth, and, as St. Paul practically put it, the Apostles are false witnesses and the Christian faith a vain bubble, blown into existence by the breath of deceit. It is with the Divinity of the Messiah, and not with the Sacrament of the Supper, that the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel is, as I believe, concerned. This interpretation falls in with the paramount purpose of the whole Gospel, which is the unfolding of the Divinity of the Lord. It liberates the discourse from anachronism. It takes away the incongruity which otherwise confronts the omission of any record by St. John of the institution of the Supper. It makes natural the proclamation by Simon Peter of His Master's Messiahship, directly after the Master had appropriated to Himself the great expectation that the Messiah would give to men His flesh to eat. It makes

intelligible the difficulty of the multitude in continuing to follow Jesus. It explains why they went away. They had been eagerly expecting the Messiah to appear, but they had thought He would appear, not as a Nazarene artisan or a peasant teacher from Galilee, but with power and great glory. And when this rankless, simple Teacher, with little following and no force behind Him, appropriated to Himself Messianic attributes, thus claiming to be the Messiah, they found His sayings "hard"—hard, not in their significance, but in their application to Himself. It was because the meaning of His words was so clear that their application to Himself was so hard to receive. They would readily and with patriotic applause have understood and accepted the promise of flesh to eat and blood to drink if made by some conquering hero, some resistless warrior. Such a one they would have tumultuously hailed as Messiah. But "THIS man!" No! The saying was too hard; the claim a bitter and insupportable disappointment, a vain profanation. And therefore they went away. Just as in later days the same Apostle, who had first proclaimed the Divinity of the Messiah, denied that Messiah on his oath when the Messiah became the victim of the priests and Pharisees, so when the meek and gentle Jesus claimed by His language to be

the Christ of God, the multitude forsook Him in faithless contempt and scorn.

Leaving, then, the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel out of account in reckoning the instances in which the Holy Communion is mentioned in the New Testament, we find those instances are as rare and reserved as the exhortations to preach the Gospel are frequent and clear. Again, let me repeat, this comparative silence concerning the Sacraments is no disparagement of the Sacraments, but it is unquestionably an inspired measure of their true proportion and their ministerial proclamation and administration in the Christian religion. To put the ministry of the Sacraments before the ministry of the Word is to destroy the revealed proportion of that ministry. Our Lord Himself seems to have gone out of His way (if we may use the phrase with adoring reverence) to save His Church from this sacerdotal reversion. Although He is the Great High Priest of the Christian profession, yet He nowhere calls Himself a priest ; and this for a quite evident reason—His priesthood was of a wholly new type, As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, the Messiah was designedly not born of the priestly tribe of Levi, but of the kingly tribe of Judah. Why ? Clearly in order to get rid in the Christian Church of Jewish conceptions of priest-

hood. Christ was not a priest after the order of Aaron, but after that of Melchizedek. What are the generic differences between these two priesthoods? The Aaronic priesthood was an hereditary priesthood; that of Melchizedek stood by itself. It had no lineage either of ancestry or descent. It had neither parentage nor succession. The Aaronic priests were subject to death; the priesthood of Christ, after the order of Melchizedek, endureth for ever—death hath no dominion over it. The priesthood of Aaron was transferable; it passed from priest to priest. The priesthood of Christ is an eternal consecration—unchangeable and such as cannot pass to any other. The sacrifices of the Aaronic priesthood were daily repeated; that of Christ is incapable of repetition, though not of sacramental remembrance. The one priesthood was full of defects and after a carnal commandment; the other free from defects and endued with the power of an endless life. The old Levitical priesthood was powerless, notwithstanding all its sacrificial shedding of blood, to take away sins; the new priesthood of Christ by its one oblation hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. The old priests were mortal servants and subjects; the great Christian High-Priest is the Son of God—our invisible and immortal King; eternally Divine

as touching His Father, of the royal non-priestly line as touching His mother.

Nothing could be more clear and convincing than the whole trend of the Epistle to the Hebrews of the inspired purpose of the New Testament to pull up and root out from the Christian Church not only the name "Jewish priesthood," but the thing itself. The only priest the Epistle recognizes in the New Covenant is Jesus Christ our Lord—Himself both Victim and Priest, who has passed into the heavens, now to appear in the presence of God for us. All the Levitical terminology and practices as applied to the Christian ministry are shown both by their complete absence in other parts of the New Testament and by the express teachings of this Epistle to be inappropriate, obsolete, and misleading. In the fulness of time they had decayed and waxed old, and at the Advent of the Messiah were ready, and obviously intended, to vanish away. And in so far as any branch of the Christian Church reintroduces Levitical notions and Levitical names as embodying these notions, that branch of the Christian Church, as surely as the Jewish Church in the day of Christ, whatever be its pomp and ceremonial and outward show of vigour, is archaic, decadent, and on the brink of perishing.

My firm conviction is that the Church of Eng-

land, especially if she boldly allies herself with other reformed Churches, may yet be the means, under God, of delivering Christianity from these perils of decadence and ruin. All that she has to do in order to accomplish this great and wonderful end is to be true to herself—true to her teachings and worship interpreted in the light of New Testament revelation. Firm as the rock of the Incarnate and the Inspired Word, nothing can prevail against her. I have already shown how loyal to the Word she is, and how jealously she maintains the Divine proportion between the Word and the Sacraments in the ordering of her deacons and priests to their ministry. Nor is that proportion less clear in her appointed form for the Consecration of Bishops. The keystone in this form—that which gives fixity, strength, durability, supreme significance to episcopal consecration—is the ministry of the Word. The introductory Collect prays that Bishops may have grace diligently to preach God's Word. The emphatic note of both the Epistles and the first of the Gospels rings forth the duty of teaching and feeding the Church of God. The second Gospel lays stress on the awe-inspiring fact that as the Father sent the Son, so—i.e., in so far as sons of men can take their share in the mission of God the Son—the Son sent forth His Apostles. I cannot

in this paper enter into the much-vexed question of the relation of the Bishops of the Church to the Apostles of Christ. I assume that Bishops are in a very real sense successors of the Apostles, and that their commission is, as far as the possibilities allow, a commission from Christ through the Holy Ghost, as was that of the Apostles. But all the inspired biographies of the Lord Jesus agree in testifying that the supreme factor in His work, apart from His Atonement and Resurrection, and other elements of our salvation wholly Divine, and therefore incapable of human imitation, was His teaching. Following His example, the Apostles made the duty of teaching their first and paramount duty. Their Apostolate was a preaching Apostolate. St. Peter could never forget the thrice-repeated command of His risen Lord, "Feed My Sheep"; and, as his after-history proves, his courage and diligence in preaching were the best test of his Apostolic commission. The Church of England clearly accepts this test, forasmuch as she makes this commission to teach her first Gospel in the Consecration Form, although it occurs in a later chapter of St. John's Evangel than the second of the appointed Gospels, thus re-emphasizing her conviction, made apparent in the Ordering of Priests, that the commission to teach takes precedence of the power to absolve,

and that the effectiveness of the latter power is conditioned by aptitude and diligence in the former duty. A Bishop, therefore, unapt to teach and feed his flock is also unapt to remit and retain its sins. As the original Apostolate was a preaching Apostolate, so the modern Episcopate, if true to its succession, will be a preaching Episcopate. This is the great truth unfolded in the introductory portion of the Anglican Form for the Consecration of Bishops—a truth particularly prominent in the third of the alternative Gospels selected for this service, a Gospel in which the Sacrament of Baptism is mentioned, and (as I believe) the Sacrament of the Holy Communion is also implied among the things commanded to be observed, but in which the duty of teaching is twice over expressly bidden.

The subsequent portions of the Consecration Service are equally distinct and definite as to the supreme obligation laid upon Anglican Bishops to be diligent in edifying Christ's Church. What could be more weighty and solemn than the interrogatories addressed to the Bishop-elect—interrogatories in this particular practically identical with those addressed to ordinand priests? "Are you determined out of the Holy Scripture to instruct the people committed to your charge, and to teach or maintain nothing as required of neces-

sity to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the same? Will you faithfully exercise yourself in the Holy Scriptures, and call upon God by prayer for the true understanding of the same; so as you may be able by them to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand and convince the gainsayers? Are you ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word, and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the same?" Again, in the prayer following the *Veni Creator Spiritus* occur the words: "Almighty God, who gave Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the Author of everlasting life, who after He had made perfect our redemption by His death, and was ascended into heaven, poured down His gifts abundantly upon men, making some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and doctors [here, as in the previous office, the title "priest" is significantly omitted], to the edifying and making perfect His Church; grant to this Thy servant such grace, that he may evermore be ready to spread abroad Thy Gospel, the glad tidings of reconciliation with Thee."

When the ministry of the Word has been thus clearly set forth as part of the fundamental—yea,

the first essential—office and work of a Bishop in the Church of God, there follows the imposition of hands and the grand petition for the gift of the Holy Ghost, without whom the episcopal office cannot be strongly discharged nor the work holily done. Then the Archbishop delivers to the consecrated Bishop, not chalice or paten, but the Bible, saying: "Give heed unto reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Think upon the things contained in this Book. Be diligent in them, that the increase coming thereby may be manifest unto all men. . . ." And finally, in the last Collect before the Benediction, we hear the same note again, reverberating clear and full: "Most merciful Father, we beseech Thee, so endue Thy servant with Thy Holy Spirit, that he, preaching Thy Word, may be earnest to reprove . . . and such a wholesome example that, faithfully fulfilling his cause, at the latter day he may receive the crown of righteousness."

It is to me at least impossible to conceive how the Church of England could possibly have laid greater stress upon the ministry of the Word and its precedence before that of the Sacraments than in the construction of these Forms for the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. In these forms there is, I again repeat, no depreciation of the Sacraments. In each of them the ad-

ministration of the Holy Communion is an integral part. Every deacon and priest at his ordination, and every Bishop at his consecration, is required to receive that Holy Sacrament. It sets the seal upon their sacred ministry. It is the channel through which they receive that strengthening and refreshing of their souls which are needful for effective work in their ministry. But the reception of the Holy Communion is, by its place in the Ordinal, clearly regarded by the Church of England as a means to an end, and not the end itself. The ministry of the Word is the end ; the ministry of the Sacraments a Divinely-appointed means in the attainment of that end.

I have limited myself thus far mainly to an examination of the Ordinal as an evidence of the loyalty of the Church of England to the guidance of Scripture in her assignment of the relative values and the true proportion of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments respectively. The Ordinal, however, is only a sample of the entire Book of Common Prayer in this respect. In every other part of the book a like proportion is maintained. No exception can be found to this rule. The rubrics require that Morning and Evening Prayer, with their appointed Psalms, shall be said daily throughout the year. The calendar appoints four portions of Holy Scripture

to be read daily. But nowhere does the Prayer-Book require, or even suggest, that there shall be a daily administration of the Holy Communion. It requires, indeed—and this we may consider the minimum, not the ideal, of obligation—that every parishioner shall communicate at least three times a year, of which Easter shall be one. It forbids a Communion except four (or three at the least) communicate with the priest. It does not even command, though it by no means forbids, a celebration of the Lord's Supper every Sunday and holy day, as is manifest from the first rubric after the Order for Administration. It certainly never contemplates a celebration without a sermon, the rubric being very distinct that after the Nicene Creed shall (not may) follow the sermon. Even in the Collects the prayer for the right use of the Holy Scriptures goes before the prayer for the ministers and stewards of Christ's mysteries. And although I am far from thinking that these mysteries do not include the Sacraments, yet I remember that in the New Testament the word "mystery" is never applied to the Sacraments, but to such marvellous revelations, once hidden, but in Christ unfolded, as the manifestations of God in the flesh, His justification in the Spirit,[1] the

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

witness of angels, the Gospel for the Gentiles, the Conversion of the heathen, the Ascension into glory. And it is in this large sense of "mystery" that the Collect for the Third Sunday in Advent would seem to use the word, seeing that the drift of its petitions is that the hearts of the disobedient may be turned to the wisdom of the just. The Baptist, by his preaching, was ordained to prepare the way for the First Coming of the Lord; and Christian ministers, by their preaching, are ordained to prepare the way for His Second Coming. And as in the Collects, so everywhere in the Prayer-Book. The sufficiency of the Scriptures takes precedence of the sufficiency of the Sacraments. The reception of the Sacraments is of immense importance, but the knowledge and obedience of the Word have an importance still more immense. We dishonour not the Scriptures alone, but the Sacraments also, by preferring the latter before the former, seeing that all things are dishonoured if not given their rightful place; and neither Scripture nor the Prayer-Book seems to me to admit of any doubt as to the relative position Divinely assigned to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the Church of Christ.

How far some of the branches of that Church have discarded this Divinely-assigned proportion

is a matter of common knowledge. In one branch an eikon is often more greatly treasured than a New Testament; in another the Scriptures are withheld in free and full measure from the private searchings of the people, while in the public services a mutilated Sacrament is adoringly worshipped; in another the Scriptures have much more than their rightful precedence, and the Sacraments much less than their rightful honour. Here and there the Sacraments, in contradiction to both Scripture and primitive Church history, are practically ignored. True Anglican Churchmen can regard none of these extremes as acceptable, or even tolerable, in their own Communion. Her way is the middle way, the Gospel way, the way of right proportion in both faith and worship, the way Divinely prepared in Holy Scripture and faithfully pursued in all her authentic offices and documents.

But many declare, and not without some show of evidence, that the Church of England is to-day in great danger of forsaking this ancient, historic middle way, and of disturbing, if not denying, the Divine proportion of the Gospel. They are asking: What means the cry for the elevation of the Holy Communion to the throne of central honour in the English Church—a throne not to be approached after a meal, a

throne gorgeously illumined, a throne before which no prostration is too low and no ceremonial too high? What means this splendid apparel for the celebrant, this rich and soul-subduing music, these clouds of incense, this awful keeping back from the Table of the Lord of the non-communicating worshippers, this daring re-introduction of Jewish and medieval terms and practices, these manuals for the altar, this Sacrifice of the Mass, in the English Church? What means this utter reversal and overthrow of the Divine proportion allotted in the New Testament, and accepted throughout the Prayer-Book, to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments respectively; this notable magnifying of one Gospel Sacrament so loftily above the other, and this glorifying of both Sacraments above the ministry of the Word? Doubtless part of the meaning may be found in the influences of reaction from the carelessness and irreverence of former days, when both Sacraments were often administered with slovenliness and in a beggarly fashion, when the font was hidden in a corner and the pulpit obscured the Table of the Lord. But is this the whole, or even the chief, meaning?

If the modern movement had gone no farther than the education of Churchmen in due reverence for the Sacraments, all men would have had good

cause to be thankful. It is unquestionably meet and right that these blessed institutions of our Lord should be administered with impressive reverence and received with profound and grateful humility. No ceremonial can be too solemn for their honour ; no reverence too profound for their worthiness, so long as it is not destructive of the inspired proportion of Gospel faith and Gospel worship. But these modern innovations, these returns to the customs of unscriptural ages, are altogether destructive of that proportion. They put first what Christ and His Apostles put second, and second (if not lower) what they put first. And it is impossible to hope that anything but evil, either for Church or nation, can be the ultimate issue of such a reversal of the revealed proportion and Divine relation of the ministry of the Word to that of the Sacraments.

Sometimes it is pleaded as a justification of this ornate and æsthetic exaltation of the Holy Communion that the Sacred Supper was the only ordinance instituted by Christ Himself and of which He was a partaker. Assuming this to be the case, it yet by no means follows that the ministry of the Holy Communion takes precedence of the ministry of the Word, or has greater glory attached to it. Nowhere in the New Testament is such precedence allowed. Had that precedence been

Christ-given, it is incredible that the Apostles and Evangelists in their writings and habits should have overlooked or neglected it. Yet we find the Apostles giving themselves up continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word.[1] In none of the inspired narratives are they recorded as giving themselves up to the ministry of the Sacraments. Far otherwise, as I have in this paper previously shown. The Pentecostal converts, indeed, were daily praising God in the Temple and breaking bread at home, or from house to house.[2] And we know from Pliny's rescript that this "breaking of bread together" was a recognized sign of membership in the Christian society. Would, indeed, that it were a more frequent—yea, universal—sign to-day! But there is no trace of this "breaking of bread," assuming it to be identical with the commemoration of the Supper, taking precedence of the ministry of the Word; otherwise Apostles would unquestionably have so taught and so practised.

Moreover, if the example of the Saviour be the ground on which precedence be accorded to the Communion, then what of fasting Communion and Communion in the evening? He instituted the Sacrament after supper.[3] It was "as they

[1] Acts vi. 4. [2] Acts ii. 46. [3] St. Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.

were eating" that Jesus took bread and said, "This is My body," and took the cup, saying, "This is My blood of the new testament." Neither the Saviour nor His Apostles at the first institution communicated fasting; nor did those of a later day, as the corruptions in the Corinthian Church testify.[1] Again, the original institution was at night, and if the breaking of bread at Emmaus be (as its illuminating results seem to warrant us in supposing it was) an administration of the Sacred Supper by our risen Lord Himself, then we know that that was in the evening also.[2]

Would it not be as reasonable to infer that because our Lord instituted His Supper in the evening and as His Apostles were eating, therefore all morning or fasting Communions are contrary to Scripture, as that because our Lord Himself instituted the Supper, therefore its administration takes precedence of the ministry of the Word? That He instituted the Supper makes the Supper Divinely sacred. It also justifies the Church in surrounding its administration with glory and honour, and in lifting it high above all materialistic considerations of food and time; but it is no justification for according to that Sacrament ascendancy over the Word. The Church has

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 20 et seq. [2] St. Luke xxiv. 29.

authority over rites and ceremonies, but it has no authority to make secondary that which the whole New Testament makes primary, or primary that which neither Christ nor His Apostles so exalted. In her Book of Common Prayer the Church of England loyally builds all her ministrations on the foundation-rock of the Apostles and Prophets, and particularly not on the shifting sands of a Judaizing priesthood, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-Stone; and on no other foundation can either the Christian society or the Christian individual be safe and strong.

This sacerdotal inversion of the Divine order in these great matters seems to me the gravest peril of the Church of England at the present day. It is not a small and accidental peril, but a peril vast and fundamental. No Church can be truly catholic, as I believe the Church of England is, which is not patient of great diversities in subsidiary matters. A catholic Church must have a catholic mind and a catholic heart. It must be the patron of a large liberty, the friend of all truth, the example of the highest love. A Church cannot be catholic and narrow. Neither can it be catholic and stationary. The world moves because it is a living world. The Church must move also or it will die. An historic Church rightly appeals to the past; a living Church works in the present;

a Christian Church has visions of the future. But past history is to be the guide of the Church, not her domineering despot. The Church is the Bride of the living Lord, not the bond-slave of obsolete traditions. And so the Church has full right—a right inherent in all vitality and health—to adapt herself to her environment. It is a small thing to us now that the early Christians broke bread from house to house, and that they had no music or liturgical forms at their administrations of the Holy Supper. We are not in their case. Their customs would not suit either our age or our circumstances; therefore we preserve them not. We prescribe our own, and we prescribe them with much diversity; for the absence of diversity in customs, as in gifts, suited to the varying needs of men, is a sign of the absence of the Holy Ghost. Dead things are uniform. Where there is life there is also variety. You may make machines all on one pattern, but not men. Skulls have more of a common likeness than souls. And so where life is, and especially Divine life, there of necessity is diversity. This diversity is part of the glory of the English Church, one sign and seal of the dwelling within her of the Holy Ghost, the Author and Giver of her life.

But this full and free diversity in customs, usages, forms of worship, and the like, does not

reach to essentials. We cannot change the essentials of our Christian faith, or their respective values as they have been revealed to us. One of these essentials is the supreme authority of the teachings of Christ and His Apostles; another is the necessity and benefit of the Holy Sacraments. These are unchangeable and never obsolete. And so also is their relation to each other, the Scriptures being primary, the Sacraments secondary. Neither our Lord nor His Apostles ever laid the same stress on the Sacraments as on the Scriptures; and the Christian Church has no power, no authority, to take the stress from where they laid it and lay it where they laid it not.

If the relative positions of the Word and Sacraments were mere matters of custom, they would be rightly regarded as changeable; but their true poportion is not merely customary; it is fundamental to the integrity and progress of the Christian faith. Experience confirms revelation in this matter. For there is no instance in any age of a Church remaining true or strong which has reversed this relative order The Greek Church has reversed this order—at least, partially; and where is the renovating, converting influence of that Church to-day? The Roman Church has wholly reversed it, and by the reversion has opened the flood-gates of error and made plain the down-

ward path of priestcraft. Almost every new day beholds a new diminution of the influence of the Papacy upon intelligent religion and religious intelligence, a new revolt against the usurpation by a superstitious sacramentalism of the supreme authority belonging to the Word of God—a revolt which, alas! though not unnaturally, finds not infrequent expression in hostility to religion of every kind. And signs are not wanting of the same kind of Nemesis dogging the heels of over-sacramentalism in the English Church to-day. I was in an Anglican church not long ago where one of these so-called Masses was being celebrated with all the pomp wherewith vestments and music and incense could magnify it. There must have been not fewer than four hundred persons in that church, and, excluding the clergy and choir, there were only six men besides myself. I am constantly hearing the same story. Earnest, intelligent, spiritual men tell me they simply cannot go to church, because what they see and hear drags them down instead of lifting them up spiritually. It appeals to their senses, but leaves their reason numb and their spirits cold. Multitudes still go for the sake of their wives and families, for old sake's sake, for the sake of example to others, and, above all, because they desire to worship God in the public assembly. But

the strain is growing very great, especially in country parishes where there is no choice of churches. Under the influence of this strain some are drifting to Nonconformity, some to private worship at home, and many more to week-end festivities and the non-observance of Sunday altogether. It is a deplorable state of things, but it is an inevitable result of over-sacramentalism. Man cannot invert the ways of God and not suffer for the inversion, however well-meant and sincere his object in the inversion may be. He cannot over-elevate the Sacraments without doing injury to the Word ; he cannot under-estimate the Word without doing injury to the Sacraments ; he cannot put either in the rightful place of the other without doing injury to both.

There, perhaps, never was an age which stood so sorely in need of the jealous maintenance of the Divine proportion between the ministry of the Word and Sacraments as the present. It is an age which, for the sake of the Sacraments themselves, needs better and truer and more constant instruction in the Word ; for the Sacraments always revert to superstitions unless they are vitalized, and their uses constantly unfolded, by the teaching of the Word. Men need to feel their need of a Saviour before they can rightly value the blessings of the Sacraments. They who love

the Saviour will generally love His Sacraments also. The great office of the ministry of the Word is the conviction of sin and the setting forth of the Saviour. Let this, then, come first, according to the appointment of God. Let this be the central mission of the Church, and all the rest will, under God, duly follow. But make a Sacrament, apart from the Word, the central service, and both Saviour and Sacrament will be losers thereby. Imminent danger lurks in the desire to have a costlier dress for the celebrant than the preacher. It is a visible sign of the disordering of the Divine order. It was a wise and true proposal made by the Royal Commission, and supported by Convocation, in 1870, that the same vestments should be worn in administering the Sacraments as in all the other services of the Church. What those vestments should be is a matter of secondary moment; the paramount requirement is that they should be the same for all services, or at least that the Holy Communion should not by any special dress or ornaments or other accompaniments be exalted above the Holy Word.

Half a century ago Dr. Pusey deprecated the introduction of Eucharistic vestments—"handsome dresses," he called them, tending "to make an idol of self while seeming to honour God and His Church." During that half-century many

things have happened to make the caution far more imperative now than then. What the Church of England sorely needs to-day is not more "handsome dresses" for her clergy, but more clergy for whom the Word of God is a lamp to their feet and a light to their path—clergy who know their Bible, both in its text and its spirit, in whom its fires burn through to the very marrow of their ministry; not professional or seminarist clergy, but clergy human in feeling, enlightened in thought, spiritual in heart and will, enthusiastically devoted to the glory of God and the service of man. Such clergy can best discharge, in dependence on the Holy Ghost, the ministry of God's Holy Word and Sacraments for the redemption of mankind.

In conclusion, I would desire to strike the same note with which I began. The ministry of both the Word and Sacraments is essential to the life and power of a Christian Church. No glory too great can be given to the Sacraments so long as their Divine relation to the Word is not disturbed, the Word taking precedence of the Sacraments, and the Sacraments, as in the ministry of Christ and His Apostles, upholding the Word. Neither can the priesthood of the Christian ministry be too highly magnified so long as it is a true catholic, Apostolic Christian priesthood—not an obsolete,

Judaizing, sacerdotalizing priesthood. It is the high and glorious office of the Christian priest to be the ordained representative of God to man and of man to God; but, except in this sense of setting forth to men the Sacrifice of the Saviour, once for all offered and incapable of repetition, and of offering the prayers and praises and gifts of men to God, he is not a priest. Even in this limited sense his prophetic takes precedence of his priestly office. This was the Divine order in New Testament times; it is the order of the Church of England to-day; and any attempt to overthrow this order, however unconscious—yea, well-intentioned—the action of the overthrowers may be, is nothing less than to unchristianize the Church and to Judaize the Gospel.

II

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

The Parable of Barrow-in-Furness

THE place in which the Congress meets to-day affords an apt illustration of the spirit of the message I desire to proclaim. Barrow is a town of quite recent development, teeming with great industries in the smelting of ore, the making of steel, the building of ships, and other kindred operations: a town of rapid growth, replete with progressive intelligence, pushing energy, and inquiring thought. Yet not far away are heath-clad hills and sequestered dales and quiet landscapes of ineffable loveliness. At its eastern gates stand the venerable ruins of Furness Abbey, one of the most beautiful of all English abbeys; while the sea and the ore on which the abounding prosperity of Barrow depends are as old as creation itself. Barrow is thus both ancient and modern, human and divine. With all its industry and inventiveness, Barrow would have

been a poor place but for the sea and ore which God has given it : and God's gifts would have been barren but for the application of man's energy and skill. God's gifts are primitive ; man's application is progressive. And Barrow is what it is because it has made progressive use of God's primitive gifts.

The Church of England Historic

So, to my thinking, must the Church of England be and do unless it is to decay and perish. It must be both ancient and modern, primitive and progressive. It has had a great past, but if it is to have a great future it must not be content with a little present. One of the surest notes of a living religion is that as it grows older it also grows younger. Always the same at its foundations : it is ever changing in its superstructure. This quality of changelessness and change makes the Christian religion to differ from all other world-religions. Christianity is essentially a historic religion. It is built on the rocks of the historic Incarnation, the historic life, the historic death, the historic resurrection of the First Paraclete and the historic descent of the Second Paraclete. I do not forget, I greatly value, the Church of England's claim to Apostolic succession, yet I believe

her surest title to historic character rests primarily on her fidelity to the historic Gospel.

The Church of England National

But the Church of England is not only historic in her relation to the changeless Christ: she is historic also in relation to the changing nation. The long, organic connexion of the English Church with the English nation is a priceless birthright not to be sold, however hungry, for any mess of pottage, however tempting. Churchmen should themselves ever remember, and never let others forget, that there was an English Church before there was an English nation. It was the Church which led the way to the making of the nation. It was the Church which taught the people the first rudiments of both liberty and literature. It was the Church which civilized the Danes and kept Norman tyranny in check. The Church, in the person of one of its greatest archbishops, was one of the principal authors of the Magna Carta. The first words on that immortal scroll are, "Let the English Church be free"; and in winning her own freedom the Church won the freedom of the people also. Some of the greatest pioneers of English liberty were ordained ministers of the English Church. Wyclif was a parish priest; Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were prelates. It

was the English Church which gave the English Bible to the English people. But for the English Church it is more than possible that the counter-Reformation would have destroyed the Reformation. And if among the Caroline divines there were some whose cringing flattery makes us blush for them, yet there were seven Caroline bishops who went to the Tower in resistance to despotism and in defence of constitutional rights. I have no desire to overlook the failures or condone the faults of the English Church, yet, in spite of all, I am well within the truth when I say that but for the English Church there would not have been, as we have them now, either English people, or English Parliament, or English liberty, or English literature, or even, when we remember the two Bacons, the philosophy and the science of which we are justly proud. And whatever part we may take in the education controversy of the hour, these facts, at least, are incontrovertible. It was the Church which created the Universities, it was Churchmen like Colet who prepared the way for secondary education, and it was the Church which conceived the idea of the national school long before the nation woke up to the wisdom of adopting it. In both these senses, then, the English Church is fundamentally historic. It is rooted in the historic facts of the unchanging Gospel, and is inseparably

bound up with the historic development of the changing nation. And it is my fervent hope that the Church of England may never cease in either of these respects to be the greatest historic Church of the world: more historic than the Greek or Roman Churches because unchangeably loyal to the New Testament Gospel, more historic than all other Churches because never divorced from wedlock with the nation.

True History Progressive

But there are two ways of being true to history. the way of wisdom and the way of folly, the way of progress and the way of stagnation, the way of light and the way of darkness, the way of life and the way of death, the way of Barrow ever depending on the distant past for its materials but on the actual present for their application; and the way of the ruins of Furness Abbey, whose present fascination is but the shadow of a departed splendour. The ruins of Furness Abbey are very beautiful. They quicken both tender and indignant memories. They are at once a deep delight and a terrible reproach. They tell of saintly builders who wrought not for the praise of men but for the greater glory of God. But they tell also of successors who knew not the day of their visitation; who put their trust too much in the

backward time, in artistic services and magnifical shrines, who turned a deaf ear to the voices of God resounding from the world around them, and tarried in their carnal traditions till the opportunity of spiritual reform was gone and the crash of destruction fell.

The Perils of a Backward Church

In one respect the Church of England stands to-day where Furness Abbey stood four centuries ago. I say nothing of the sensualities and other corruptions of the monasteries in the sixteenth century. These corruptions may have been less than the English annalists recount or more than the Roman apologists allow, but, thank God, there is nothing at all resembling them in the English Church of the present age. The resemblance lies in another direction. The monasteries looked too far back, yet not far enough ; for if the backward look of the Church stops short of the Gospel era, it is a look both too short and too long. It is disastrous to go as far back as Councils unless we go still further back to Christ. Moreover, the monasteries were out of touch with their age. They were stereotyped. They understood not the signs of the times. The wings of a new knowledge were rising around them, but wrapped in old clerical costumes they dreamed they could

weather the storm. Shutting their own eyes, they supposed they could shut the eyes of others. There may not have been great wickedness amongst them ; there may indeed have been much earnestness and saintliness. But their saintliness was the saintliness of superstition, and their earnestness the earnestness of blind determination. And to me it seems that our Church of England is in similar danger now. It is in danger of going too near to the Middle Ages, yet not near enough to the Christ. It is in danger, too, of falling behind the times : and, in consequence, of being forsaken by the people. The most solemn fact I know about the Church of England to-day is that so small a proportion of the whole population, and a still smaller proportion of the male population, attends her public services. We condemn the indifference of the people : but our condemnation is unjust if we condone the shortcomings of the Church. And one of these shortcomings is that the world is too much in the Church and the Church too little in the world. No true Church will ever be of the world ; yet it will always be, and be felt to be, in the world. Moreover, no healthy Church will cling too closely to its past. Its healthiness will be manifested by its power of adapting its past to its present, and making its present a preparation for its future. Almost

every age is to some extent an age of transition from a waning past to a waxing future; and a living Church must be the contemporary of each successive age.

The Oxford Movement

The present age seems in a peculiar measure an age of transition for the English Church. The Oxford Movement has done great things for the Church of England. It has revived the historic sense, has shown the English Church to be not only national but catholic also, has emphasized the fundamental difference between regeneration and conversion, has proved that reverence for forms is not necessarily formalism, has assisted the Evangelical movement to deepen the sense of sin, has brought into prominence the sacramental elements of the faith, and has renewed the social vigour of the Christian revelation. But these great things the Oxford Movement wrought at great cost; not only in the loss of some of its noblest founders, but also in the loss of the true proportion between authority and freedom, of the right bearing of the past on the present, of the strict limitations of the value of ritual in religion, of the due relation between corporate life and individual responsibility, and particularly in the loss of the full realization of the rights and liberties

of the laity of the Church. The hour, I believe, has now struck for reckoning up the losses of the Oxford Movement not less carefully than its gains, for winnowing the chaff from the wheat, that the fields of the present may be sown with better seed for the harvests of the future.

The Questions of the Age

One of the most pressing questions which the Oxford Movement has left for our solution is the question, "What meanest thou by this word Church?" The modern age is beginning to clamour for a more clear definition of the *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus:* and one of the prime duties of every Churchman to-day, at least so it seems to me, is to make as clear as he can to his own mind, that he may also make clear to the minds of others, what he really means by the Church; by the Church's relation to the Christ, and by the Christ's relation to the Church; by the Church's relation to himself and his own relation to the Church. He ought to be quite sure whether by the Church he means the whole body of the baptized or only a selection of them; whether the Church includes non-episcopal communions or is limited by descent through Episcopacy; what is the real distinction between the Church visible and invisible; what is the true nature of a sacra-

ment, and particularly what is the true Christian rank of the Second Sacrament in the economy of the Gospel; whether the Church governs the doctrines of the Bible or the Bible governs the doctrines of the Church; whether persons may search the Scriptures freely and independently for themselves, or only search them after they have been taught to find nothing else save that for which they have been authorized to look; whether tradition has the authority of truth or truth be indispensable to the authority of tradition; whether any Council since Apostolic days has been so free from error as to claim infallibility for its decrees; on what precise grounds and to what extent the opinions of ancient fathers are of greater value than those of modern theologians and divines; whether God the Holy Ghost be not as much the Living Guide of the Church in the twentieth as in any preceding century; whether the Church is a dead edifice walled in by the barriers of the past, or a living organism glorying in its ancestry, yet receiving direct from God in each succeeding age the moral strength and spiritual elevation which that age requires. These and other similar questions are demanding to-day, with fresh and increasing pressure, a clear and intelligent answer.'

The Growth of Modern Knowledge

The answer given by the Oxford Movement can no longer be considered either final or decisive. And for this reason. Whether the Church moves or not, the world moves. With the world knowledge grows from more to more: it is for the Church to secure that with the growing knowledge a growing reverence dwells. But to this end the Church's knowledge must keep abreast of the world's knowledge. In two distinct and very notable directions the world's knowledge to-day is entirely different from that of a hundred years ago. First, it is penetrating down to the masses; and next, it is becoming increasingly scientific in temper. With regard to the latter of these directions, we know that the fundamental attributes of the scientific temper are a passion for fearless inquiry and a devotion to demonstrative truth, however contrary to accepted opinion. How does the Church of England to-day intend to treat the scientific temper of the age? Does she intend to welcome it as a friend or resist it as a foe? And with regard to the general diffusion of knowledge we see that one result has already been to diminish amazingly the orbit of ecclesiastical authority. The clergy are no longer the chief depositaries of secular, or the sole depositaries of sacred, learning.

Our universities are no longer close, clerical seminaries. The heads of some colleges, and many secondary schools, and all elementary schools, are lay persons. Women are beginning to take first classes in the Honour Schools of Theology. Two of the distinguished readers of papers on Biblical subjects at this Congress are laymen ; and one is Norrisian Professor of Theology at Cambridge. The pew universally claims the right, and not infrequently has the right to the right, of criticizing the pulpit. Many a man in the workshop to-day knows more about the Bible and Church history than many a monk and bishop a few generations ago. When the printing-press was given to the world it dug the grave of clerical autocracy and ecclesiastical infallibility, and planted therein a little tree in whose outspreading branches the birds of both psychic and spiritual reason are now building their nests. And the question of all questions for every Christian community is, " What course will it take in relation to these stupendous changes ? " We know what reply the Roman Church is giving to this question, and we know also what answer the nations are giving to that reply. We know what reply the Greek Church is giving, and vast rumblings are in the air in answer to that reply. In its turn every other Christian community will be

required to give its reply ; and I ask to-day, with all the earnestness of which I am capable, " What reply will the Church of England give ? " Will she be primitive without being progressive ? Will she shut herself in behind walls of tottering traditions ? Will she shrink into a denomination within the nation ? Will she educate her priests as seminarists ? Will she keep the cup of power, if not of sacrament, from the laity ? Will she make traditional theology the basis of religion ? Or will she choose the better part, and be both primitive and progressive, not discarding tradition, but preferring truth ; not ceasing to be definite while desiring to be enlightened, training her clergy, not in caste exclusiveness but in clear comprehensive thinking, making life in God the basis of religion and life for man its evidence, bringing the light and power of the Gospel to bear on all national, intellectual, social, and moral problems ; according a glad welcome to all reverent inquiry, and a loving embrace to every kind of truth : recognizing the sacramental priesthood of the laity, of which priesthood the clergy are, through Christ and His Apostles, the ordained ministers ?

Man Essentially Religious

These are some of the questions loudly calling for an answer to-day. What answer, I ask again,

will the Church of England give. Remember human nature is ineradicably religious. You cannot sunder man, man cannot sunder himself, from the intuitions and emotions of religion. God has made man in His image, and although we may deface, we cannot undo the work of God. If not truly religious, man will be religious falsely; if not religious rationally and spiritually, he will be religious irrationally and superstitiously. The intensity of the denial of false religion is one evidence of the strength of true religion's claim. The absence of so large a proportion of the population from public worship does not prove that man is reverting to brutish non-religiousness; but it does leave room for serious misgivings that the priests and prophets of our public worship may be falling out of touch with the religious knowledge and the religious requirements of the modern age. It does not rest with the Churches to determine whether men shall be religious or not. God has settled that. But it does rest with the Churches to decide whether or not they will co-operate with God in developing the progressive religiousness of man. If they fail, then will the days of the good and wild olives be revived: the present Churches will be cut off, and God will graft on some other stock the religious growths of the future.

Conclusion

The moment of decision for the Church of England is, I believe, drawing very near. We stand at the parting of the ways. The only choice before us is advance or ruin : fresh development or certain decay. We cannot be saved by having been the Church of the past unless we become also the Church of the present. It will not do for us to trust to our Apostolic succession, as the Jews trusted to their descent from Abraham, however glorious that succession may be, unless we come into organic relation with the world around us, and have a living faith in a living God. It is not enough to recapitulate the services which the Church has conferred on bygone generations. The present generation rightly asks what service the Church is conferring now. The world in which the Church is called to work to-day is very different from the world of the Middle Ages. It has become a world of increasing reverence for reason and of diminishing submission to authority. It has become a world with both a worse and a better side than formerly : the worse side is the materialism engendered by inordinate wealth and inordinate poverty ; the better side is the spread of knowledge, the love of truth, the sense of human brotherhood. In presence of both these vast

developments, what shall we Christians do? Shall we carnalize and materialize our holy religion? Shall we shrink from enlightenment and dread the iconoclasm of truth, and, magnifying hostilities among ourselves, show the world that we neither know nor care what human brotherhood means? Or shall we, for the sake of the Divine Redeemer and the sinful redeemed, close our ranks and sink our differences, resolute to break materialism in pieces with the forces of the Spirit of God, the God of all kinds of good knowledge, the Author and Giver of all kinds of truth, the loving Father of all men, in love of Whom all men of every race and Church are brethren?

In my young days I often dreamed dreams, and now I am growing old I sometimes see visions. Among my sweetest visions is that of a truly Catholic and Apostolic Church: a Church wide as the world and holy as the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God. In this vision I seem to see all the Churches slowly marching into the one flock of that one Church: with its one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one all-Father. In the van of the procession I see our own beloved Church of England, with a vast train of young and old, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, sinful yet pardoned, carried in her arms and holding on to her robes. Then I see the Nonconformist and

other reformed Churches following close behind; then the Greek and other Eastern Churches, emancipated from their trammels and glowing with freedom; then the Roman Church, purified as by fire, and last of all, the hosts which no man can number, all washed in the blood of the Lamb. Then I wake and find it all a vision; yet not a vision of the black closing night, but of the red opening dawn. That God will grant to this Congress the power to help forward, if only by a single step, the realization of this vision is my heart's most earnest prayer to-day.

III

THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

IN making a survey of the present position of the English Church a great variety of points of view naturally offers itself. But as the following survey must be brief, the selected points of view cannot be many.

(*a*) We observe first the great change which is slowly, yet surely, passing over the direction and character of the Church's work. The nineteenth century has been one of the most remarkable centuries in the history of progressive mankind; and in no respect more remarkable than in its religious developments. In all Christian countries mere Deism is now practically dead. It has gone the way of the handloom and the stage coach and the mutton candle. Indifference abounds, agnosticism abounds; but Deism is dead. Physical Science and Butler's Analogy and Wesleyan Methodism and the Oxford Movement and the Gospel of the Incarnation have

conspired together and killed it. Religion also as a police regulation and a civic test and a mere engine of state is a thing of the past. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the State was the strength of the Church: at its close the Church is seeking to impart its noblest spirit to the State. A hundred years ago the Church was the Church of the landlord and the employer and the wealthy man: to-day it is the Church of the tenant and the toiler and the poor. In less than another hundred years we may hope it will be the Church of all alike, without distinction of income or station or rank. A hundred years ago religion was individual and personal and political: to-day it is social and collective and spiritual. In less than another hundred years we may hope it will be both individual and social, personal and collective, in the best sense political and more than ever spiritual. A hundred years ago Foreign Missions were in their infancy: to-day they enjoy a strenuous virility A hundred years ago the Bible disputed with the Pope the claim of a mechanical infallibility: to-day, unlike the Pope, it has developed into a Living Voice, challenging examination, fascinating intelligence, quickening with its freshly-unfolded revelations the enlightenment and progress and brotherhood of men. None of these changes are wholly due to the English

Church; some of them she has slowly adopted rather than primarily originated: but in all of them she now takes a living, and a growing, share.

(*b*) Secondly may be observed the enlargement of the numbers and the extension of the organization of the English Episcopal Church. Since the days of the Reformation non-Episcopal Churches —sometimes in alliance with, and sometimes in defiance of, the Episcopal Church—have done much and glorious work for Christ and humanity in England. They have won the battle for private judgment, they have asserted the citizenship and ministry of the laity in the Kingdom of God, they have assisted in establishing the responsibility of the clerisy in things secular to secular courts, they have abolished the profanity of sacramental tests for civic offices, they have overthown the notion of religion enforced by law and substituted liberty of conscience in religion, they have demonstrated the might of religious conviction in civil and political life, and have bathed in a sea of glory the richness and power of personal piety.

Yet notwithstanding the splendid record of the past labours and triumphs of non-Episcopal Churches, there seems little doubt that at the present time no religious agency in England is making the same progress as the Episcopal Church

of England. To take the most recent statistics we find that since 1870 the number of teachers and scholars in Church Schools has more than doubled: over £25,000,000 has been voluntarily contributed for the erection and maintenance of Church Schools; nearly £500,000 on Church Training Colleges; over £20,000,000 on Church Extension in large towns; over £700,000 on the fabric of Cathedrals and £520,000 on the foundation of seven new bishoprics. The number of young persons confirmed is annually over 200,000, and of deacons ordained to the ministry 650. In Sunday Hospital Collections the Church has contributed in the last twenty-five years more than £1,200,000, or nearly two and a half times the amount contributed by all other religious bodies. In the year 1896 alone the voluntary offerings of the Church of England for missionary, educational, pastoral and philanthropic work exceeded £7,000,000.

Outside the bounds of England similar phenomena present themselves. It is only one hundred and eleven years since Charles Inglis was consecrated Bishop of Nova Scotia with jurisdiction over the whole of North America. Less than sixty years ago there were only seven Colonial Bishops: three in North America, one in Australia, and three in India. Now, including

22 Missionary Bishops, there are 99 Colonial Bishops. And in the United States, including 18 Missionary Bishops, there are 83 bishops more. In the entire Anglican Communion there are 293 bishops, and over 32,000 clergy. Of these 293 bishops, 245 were summoned to the Lambeth Conference last year, and 194 actually attended; about three times as many as the Bishops composing the famous Council of Trent; and six times as many as voted for some of its primary decrees.

Confining, however, the purview of this Paper to the Church of England in England alone we observe, despite the great growth in numbers, the extension of organization, the enlargement of benevolence, and the deepening of influence, that much remains to be done in divers directions before even the most loyal and optimistic children of the Church can consider her position satisfactory and her methods rich in promise of fruits that shall remain.

(1) The status of the Clergy must be greatly improved both materially and intellectually. At present the material condition of the Clergy is a gross dishonour to the laity of the Church. In thousands of instances the official income of the clergy is wholly inadequate to maintain them in self-respecting decency; and but for the

private incomes of themselves, or their wives, they would either be left to starve or driven to seek their bread in other occupations. I know cases of clergymen who have worn nothing but second-hand clothing for years; and in whose families flesh is a meat unknown, except perhaps on Sundays. They never see a new book unless it is kindly sent them by friends. The causes of this destitution are too familiar to require more than a bare recital:—the great decline of glebe rents and tithes, the oppressive rating of clerical incomes,[1] the excessive subdivision of parishes, an over-confident hope of maintaining the clergy through the offertory alone, imprudent marriages and the fond hankering of Assistant Curates for what they falsely dream are independent spheres. But whatever the causes, the fact is both a weakness and a disgrace to the

[1] A country Incumbent writes to *The Guardian* of March 30, 1898: "I have already this year paid nearly £70 in direct taxation out of a half-yearly income of £160." Another, signing himself, "Almost in Despair," says: "I have just received the tithes due March 25 for three months amounting to £45. This leaves me only £16 10*s.* 10*d.* to pay for the expenses of my family for the last three months. Our anxiety and poverty are great. I have been planting potatoes all morning without anybody to help me. Now I go to visit a widely scattered parish."

English Church. Looked at robustly even the great Clergy Charities are a dishonour to the Church. The need for such Charities, e.g., as The Poor Clergy Relief Corporation, which last year assisted 780 cases with grants ranging from £5 to £25 and 320 cases with clothing, has no right in either justice or decency to exist at all. Deserving of grateful praise are the generous supporters of the Charity: all honour is due to them. But that such a noble Institution should be necessary, and that last year alone it should have received nearly 1,000 applications, every one of them distressing, is a discredit and a shame to the English Church. The knowledge that hundreds of the clergy are driven to beg, and live by doles, should haunt the laity as an appalling spectre. And even when the private incomes of the clergy remove them beyond the reach of want, it surely cannot be a pleasant reflection for a wealthy layman that he is receiving religious ministrations for less than they cost; and that he is dependent on the charity of the parson for the services of the Church he attends. You give your fee to the doctor or lawyer without regard to his personal income. And the personal income of the clergyman has nothing to do with his claim for a righteous official income. What is needed is not charity on either side but justice on

both ; a just return of work on the part of the clergyman for his income, and a just income from the laity for his work. The foundation of the Queen Victoria Clergy Sustentation Fund in 1896 promises to be the dawn of a better era in the material condition of the clergy. It is not a charity doled out to clergy in distress, but justice meted out to impoverished benefices. The clergy have no desire to be rich. If they felt any such desire they would seek its gratification in some more lucrative calling. But what is essential to the honour of the Church, the self-respecting independence of the clergy, the efficiency of their labours, and the removal of the blemish on the escutcheon of the laity, is a just and modest and frugal maintenance.

Both as a result of such a maintenance and as an incitement to its supply, it is imperative that the intellectual status and training of the clergy should be largely improved. It is both noteworthy and thankworthy that the clergy as a body are intellectually what they are. No one without a wide and varied experience can realize the work the clergy are doing, and the way in which they are doing it—in crowded city slums, on thinly peopled country-sides, among rich and poor, employers and employed. Yet, on the other hand, it must be confessed that large

numbers of them do not keep pace, and are not capable of keeping pace, with the progress of religious knowledge and aspiration and thought. They have not advanced with the advance of education; many of their parishioners have left them far behind in the struggle for light and learning. A University degree is not the whole, or even an indispensable part, of the mental furniture of a clergyman: many non-Graduates have done splendid work as preachers and pastors and priests. Still it is not a hopeful sign that, relatively to the increase of population and the spread of enlightenment, the number of graduates from our Ancient Universities who enter Holy Orders is comparatively small. In the Churches of Scotland most of the ministers take an Arts' Degree before they begin their special theological training for their ministry. They thus gain some general culture before they begin to specialize. They are first taught to be men; then theologians. Not until they have been inspired with a free and expansive atmosphere do they concentrate their interests within the narrower range of their professional studies.

A large, liberal training is a prime necessity of the clergy of the English Church. In every department of knowledge there is a peril lest specialization should grow too strong. For

thoroughness and profundity specialization is clearly essential. The years of man are so few, his capacities so limited, the least of subjects is yet so great, that to master the details of any subject in its far-reaching fulness requires special application and concentrated research. Yet as a precedent preparation for specialization the art of generalization, an art possible only to men of general knowledge and enlightened vision, is indispensable. No man can teach his own subject well who knows no subject except his own. To avoid dulness and dryness, to obtain wealth and variety of illustration, to avoid exaggeration and disproportion, to maintain the perspective of truth, to learn the right relation of his own subject to other subjects of equal value and influence, the specialist must be in living and appreciative touch with other subjects. To teach one thing well the teacher must know many things. The teachers in our Elementary Schools are beginning to acknowledge frankly their need for a more liberal training: to thirst nobly, and cry out, for a wider range of knowledge. They feel that to teach even little children the elements of learning—to quicken apprehension, and kindle observation and stimulate the processes of thought—it is necessary that they themselves should have a larger and more lively training.

And if the clergy are to teach and preach with power, to arouse in the people an intelligent vitalizing interest in religion, their education and training must not only keep abreast with, it must forge ahead of, the average learning of the day. The ignorant cannot lead the ignorant except into the ditches of superstition. If they profess to lead the enlightened, their presumption is the butt of cynicism and scorn. The true priest is ordained for men in things pertaining to God. To reach men he must first have a knowledge of men : of their constitution, their history, their interests, and the laws of their being. Without some share in this knowledge, he is unequipped for his work. And a liberal culture is one prime necessity of this knowledge. A liberal culture, therefore, is the necessary foundation of an effectual priesthood. Upon this foundation alone can the true priest build the temple of his theology; a beautiful and attractive temple, adorned and hallowed with all things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

To attain this end the standard of examination for Holy Orders needs raising; and the course of training of non-graduate candidates requires rich enlargement by the addition of liberal studies as a pre-requisite for special theological training. As the Bishop of Chester has tersely said, the

Church of England must make her clergy more worthy of their hire, and their hire more worthy of the men.

(2) Next to an improvement in the material and educational condition of the clergy the Church of England stands sorely in need of enthusiasm among the laity. Individual laymen, here and there, are grandly enthusiastic. But of corporate enthusiasm for the Church among the general body of the laity there is a general lack. For the Establishment and Endowments of the Church, indeed, there is a strong power of determined defence; but for the Church as the national expression of the Faith, as the organ of religion, as the visible Body of Christ in the land, the enthusiasm is altogether inadequate both to the Church's claim and the Church's need. Such enthusiasm as there is, is mainly personal and individual not collective and organized. Yet life without organization has neither the fulness nor the force of life. Organization is power. As organization without life is mechanical, so life without organization is ephemeral. The power of the Church of Rome largely springs from the discipline and compactness of her organization. In the hour of conflict and stress an unorganized Church is as an unorganized army: the very hope of victory is absent.

Now it is the boast of the English Church that her laity are an integral portion of her frame and constitution. The Church of England is not a clerical Church. Every baptized and faithful child is counted part of her body. According to her constitution every avenue of Christian service and Christian ministration, except the ordered ministry of the Word and Sacraments, lies wide open to the laity. The machinery for carrying into full effect in government and administration the fact of lay Church membership may be yet defective ; but the fact is there and incontrovertible. Throughout the world there is no Church in which, by the essential spirit of both doctrine and discipline, there is more ample and fundamental recognition of lay membership than the Church of England.

Why then is there so little Church patriotism ? Some measure of the fault doubtless lies at the door of those clergy who magnify their office to the detriment of lay fervour and co-operation. But even those clergy who most deeply desire to extend the ministry of the laity, to arouse their interest in the duties and responsibilities of Church membership, often receive but a chill response to their invitations and appeals Why is this ? I believe it is mainly due to three causes. First, an absorption in worldly affairs with a corresponding

lukewarmness towards religion. Secondly, the traditions of Congregationalism still lingering in the Church; traditions which are wholly adverse to the growth of parochial, diocesan, or general Church patriotism. Thirdly, the great dearth of instruction in the real character and constitution, the past history and the present heritage, of the Church.

The best defences of the Church are a knowledge of Church history, Church reform, Church work: and in the combination of these three will be found the best means for the promotion of Church patriotism. The knowledge of Church History; of the character, origin, growth, conflicts, reforms, aspirations of the Church; is essential to Church patriotism. Faith in the Church grows out of knowledge of the Church. The history of the Church is clouded with faults and follies and failures; but its very clouds are radiant with virtues and graces, with hard-won victories and the glories of heroic martyrdom. The names of Alban, Bede, Anselm, Langton, Grosstête, Wycliffe, Cranmer, Hooker, Law, Butler, Wilberforce, Keble, Simeon, with hosts of others of every school within the Church, shine like stars in the Church's firmament. Yet how few lay Churchmen have read the lives, or know the toils, or have breathed the heroism, of these thinkers, and

inspirers, and martyrs of the Church. We build, and rightly build, monuments to the assertors and defenders of our national liberties—our Boadiceas, Alfreds, Cromwells, Marlboroughs, Nelsons, Wellingtons, Peels—we wisely and thankfully cover the land with statues of our greatest statesmen and monarchs. We ponder their lives and are stirred with patriotism by their memories. And not until we study and adorn the history of our Church as we adorn and study the history of our Nation, will the fires of Church patriotism be kindled on the altars of our being, commingling their upward-shooting flames with the fires of our national patriotism.

The Committee for Church Defence and Church Instruction, whose centre of operations is at the Church House, Westminster, is doing good work in this direction by its endeavours, through the means of illustrated lectures and interesting books, "to encourage all to learn for themselves the truth and soundness of the position of the Church of England, and to diffuse a solid knowledge of what the Church has been in the past, and now is, what she has done, and is doing, under Christ "Her Head." The scope of Church History is almost boundless in its extent and variety and attractiveness. It touches the life of the nation at every point. It is at once reverential,

recreative, stimulating. It is alive with social problems and edifying with spiritual instruction. Every parish and diocese in the land may contribute to its information and share in its interest. Even the simple practice of placing in every Church a few brass tablets recounting the names of former vicars and churchwardens is a help in the realization of the continuity of the Church's existence. Some of the parochial clergy have done admirable service by publishing as illustrated pamphlets short histories of their parishes. The publication of Diocesan Histories is also slowly penetrating the people with the sense of Diocesan Unity. The new life latterly infused into the richer services and more varied uses of our Cathedrals is having its effect. In some dioceses, such for instance as Carlisle and Peterborough, where the Cathedral is on the verge, instead of being at the centre, the work of the Cathedral in imparting to the diocese unity and life and light is rendered very difficult by reason of distance. Still difficulties are seldom insurmountable by patience and prayer, by resolution and skill; and throughout the whole land, notwithstanding all difficulties, the growth of the Cathedral ideal must issue in the growth of great Cathedral influence in moulding the convictions and inspiring the patriotism of the Churchmen of England.

One of the most interesting conversations I have ever heard, I heard on a railway journey not long ago between two intelligent workmen upon the importance of Cathedrals and the value to the people of a knowledge of Church History.

The better knowledge of Church History will prepare the way for Church Reform ; and Church Reform of the best and most progressive kind. The way of true progress is neither the way of the sky-rocket, nor the volcano ; the way of momentary flash or thunderous smoke or destroying lava. It is the way of patience and soberness and knowledge. Many Church Reforms are imperatively needed : particularly and primarily the reform of all reforms, viz. the power of the Church herself to reform herself. But it is reform we require, not revolution. Revolutions break with the past ; their advocates have no sense of continuity ; no reverence for historic succession. To improve the fruit they tear up the root. The strength of the English Constitution, and the confidence reposed in English Law, are both alike due to the lowness and naturalness of their development.

> Ours is a land of just renown,
> Where freedom broadens slowly down
> From precedent to precedent.

By conservation of the past we create undreamt-

of possibilities for the future. By carefully looking backward on the way we have come we are best enabled to look forward and judge of the surest of all the many tracks lying before us. Hasty legislation is bad legislation. Every successful reform is the better for all the failures which have preceded it.

Of all Church Reforms within the last half century none has been so conspicuous and beneficent as that in Church Life and Work. Cathedrals and Churches have been restored; services have been beautified and brightened and popularized; but above all *living* agencies of many kinds; brotherhoods, sisterhoods, guilds, associations secular, social, spiritual; men's societies and women's societies; have come into existence and multiplied. And it is very noteworthy that this great development of the living agencies of the Church was a consequence of two great causes, apparently dissimilar yet really integrate—the Evangelical Revival and the Oxford Movement; the quickening of personal piety and the revival of the sense of historic continuity in the Church. The Oxford Movement was the struggle of Catholicity against Congregationalism, of Unity against Separatism, of the social claims of religion against its individualizing propensities, of the historic sense against the personal preference. The

Evangelical Revival which preceded the Oxford Movement was the sacred assertion of the fundamental truth of the necessity of the personal Communion of the personal soul with the Personal God; without the intervention of any mediator except the One Mediator, Himself combining in One Person the two natures of Divinity and Humanity. From the Oxford Movement has been received the redintegration of the historic consciousness and the love of order. From the Evangelical Revival has proceeded the renewal of personal piety and the cultivation of the heavenly mind. The one manifests itself mainly in perfectness of organization, the other in the development of the inner life. Between these two, and stretching out a hand towards both, is a third party, whose weakness is doctrinal indistinctiveness and whose strength is enlightened sympathy. The ideal is the union of the three: intellectual enlightenment, historic continuity, deep personal piety.

Towards this ideal the Church of England seems slowly, and after many backslidings, to be steadily mounting. Historical criticism, social interests, improved organization, individual holiness are by many of her members being eagerly pursued. But the ideal will never be fully attained till every Churchman, not only as a separate unit,

but as a member of a compact and living Body, patriotically determines to do his part. What the Church of England needs to-day is more vital and visible unity ; the abolition of all class privilege in worship and all class preaching from the pulpit : the full power of enlightened utterance and autonomous development ; an improvement of the material and intellectual condition of her clergy ; a more fervid and better organized patriotism on the part of her laity ; and a deeper holiness on the part of all. Beyond and before every other gift she needs the Pure and Perfect Life from above which is the strength of all weakness, the light of every darkness, the Life of all life, both to the Church and mankind.

IV

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

ALL Church-people are not true Christians; but all true Christians are Church-people. They belong to Christ, who is the Divine Head of the Church; and, therefore, they belong to His Body, which is the Church itself. People may be formally attached to the Body of Christ without being vitalized and nourished by the Head, as dead branches may still hang on to a living tree; but if they are nourished by the Head, then they cannot but belong vitally to the Body, just as every leaf or branch, so long as it assimilates sap, belongs vitally to the tree. There is no truer definition of the Church of Christ than this: they in whom the Christ dwells and who themselves dwell in the Christ. "Wherever Jesus Christ is," says Ignatius in his Epistle to the Smyrnæans, "is the Catholic Church."

And as this is the best definition of the Church—I in them and they in Me—so the truest definition of schism is separation from the Christ. Every

dead leaf or dead twig, although apparently part of the tree, is to all intents and purposes cut off from it. There is no vital connection between a dead branch and a living tree, notwithstanding their outward and visible bond. In like manner every dead Christian is essentially disconnected from the Christ—the Christ does not live in him, and he does not live in the Christ. To all appearances he may still be a Churchman; but in fact and truth he is a separatist and schismatic. For real schism, like real faith, is not an outward thing, a thing of mere appearance. Both are inward realities; the one is an affection, the other a disaffection, of the heart.

In all ages men have been prone to regard both religion and irreligion too much as external matters. There is no error against which our Lord and His Apostles set their faces more resolutely than this. They taught incessantly that religion is spirit and truth, not letter and tradition. The organizations of religion are external; but its life is inward, the operation of the Spirit of God within the deepest consciousness of man. It is the same with Churchmanship. There is undoubtedly a visible Catholic Church, just as there is a visible collective humanity. But as in collective humanity there are many kindreds, races, tribes, and tongues, so in the Catholic Church

there are many communities, denominations, congregations. Every congregation of faithful Christians is *a* Church of Christ; and the sum total of these congregations is Christ's Holy Catholic Church. The visibility of the Catholic Church cannot consist in uniformity of organization. For if uniformity of organization were an indispensable note of the Catholic Church, then, obviously, seeing that uniformity of organization exists only within the limits of the several branches of the Church, the Catholic Church would either be non-existent, or else reducible to the confines of single denominations, which is contrary both to the comprehensive character of the Church and to the general experience of Christians. In like manner it is clear that, however desirable and good for other reasons episcopacy may be, yet even episcopacy is not of the essence of the Catholicity of Christ's Church. For, apart from the uncertainty of the origin of episcopacy, and the diversity of views held by scholars on its character and extent, as sanctioned by the New Testament, there is one great outstanding fact concerning episcopacy which is of supreme and cardinal importance—viz., the fact that God Himself does not limit His gracious operations within its bounds. He pours richly, and without stint, His showers of blessing upon non-episcopal

Churches. He inspires psalmists and prophets within their gates. He rears saints within their sanctuaries—saints compared with whom some of the saints canonized in episcopal calendars are saints of meagre saintliness. In prisons non-episcopal martyrs have testified by their sufferings to Christ's sustaining presence. In missionary lands they have rejoicingly died for their Redeemer. Never in the history of non-episcopal Churches, such as Presbyterianism and Methodism, have such dishonour and shame been brought upon the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as, through many centuries, that Gospel suffered at the hands of the all-dominant episcopal Church. I believe profoundly in episcopacy—its ancient descent, its continuity, its priceless historic worth—but I would rather renounce episcopacy than profanely seek to limit the Church of Christ to its boundaries, or describe non-episcopalians as schismatics, or deny them a rightful and noble inheritance in the gifts and graces of the true Catholic Church. To do this would seem to me to be fighting against God, and to ban those whom He quite manifestly blesses.

If, then, the visibility of the Catholic Church consists neither in episcopacy nor uniformity of organization, in what does it consist? Our Lord

has left us in no doubt whatever as to the right answer to this searching question. He told His disciples that men would know, recognize, and acknowledge them by their fruits. As of a tree, so also of a Church, the Divine test, the test which God approves, and even the world admits, is the test of fruit. Christ's own test of discipleship was fruit; and no better test of Churchmanship can be found. There is no mistaking the presence of the Holy Spirit, whether in an individual or a society. Wherever the fruit of the Spirit is—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—there the Spirit is; and where the Spirit is, there also is the essence of the Catholic Church. This essence may embody itself in diversities of ordinances and organizations; but being all of one and the same Spirit, they are also of one and the same Church—that Church which, in the New Testament, is called the Body of Christ, and is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. No community, however ancient its descent or compact its organization, is coterminous with the Church of the Living God which does not reckon among its members all the faithful in Christ Jesus. The Church is the fulness of the Christ, and includes all those who are filled with Him. The visibility of the Church is made manifest by the fidelity

of its members to the Christ, and the fulness of the Christ in them.

Other definitions of the Church, many in number, theologians of various schools have attempted to formulate. Some of these definitions approach more or less closely to New Testament definitions. But assuredly the New Testament definitions are the truest and the best. And the essence of the New Testament definitions, though differing in their form of expression, is always the same. A particular Church may be a Church in a house, or a Church in a city, or a Church in a province ; but the Church, the complete Church, is the Body of Christ, comprising all these particular members. He is the Head of all alike, and all compacted together in Him, and from Him receiving their life and power, form the glorious aggregate of His Holy Catholic Church.

In common discourse, the word " Catholic " has lost its original, and only real, significance. Frequently, indeed, the word is used to express an artificial meaning entirely contrary to its real meaning. The real meaning of Catholic is universal ; yet one of its common applications is fundamentally partial. All such expressions as Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic are, as ordinarily used, contradictions in terms. We might as rightly talk of fragmentary wholes, or par-

ticular universals, as of Catholic adjectivally limited in any way. Romanists clearly perceive this absurdity, and consequently reject it. Although subject to Rome, they style themselves simply Catholics. By this they mean, and intend to declare, that Papal subjection is an indispensable note of Catholicity. In this declaration they set themselves against God; for nowhere has God declared the Pope to be the head of His Church on earth. On the contrary, as all men know, He abundantly blesses those who have renounced this headship. Similarly with Anglo-Catholics. If by this term be signified merely and exclusively English Episcopalians, then is the term doubly misused. First because it denies Catholic Churchmanship to non-Episcopalians, thus thrusting from the fold of Christ those whom Christ, by His evident embrace, includes; and secondly by prefixing a restrictive limit to a universal word. If, however, by the term Anglo-Catholicism be signified that branch of the Catholic Church whose motherland is England, and if in that branch be included non Episcopalian as well as Episcopalian Christians, then, indeed, the term is both intelligible and true. As, also, would be Roman Catholicism, as signifying that branch of the Catholic Church whose centre is Rome; or Greek Catholics whose chief patriarch

dwells at Constantinople; or Lutheran Catholics whose great Confession is that of Augsburg; or American Catholics whose realm is beyond our setting sun; or Presbyterian Catholics who acknowledge not monarchical episcopacy; or Baptist, or Methodist, or Congregational, or Calvinist, or Jansenist Catholics, or any other member of the glorious Body incorporated into, and living in, the life of the Divine Head, Jesus Christ, the Catholic Lord of the Catholic Church. All Churchmanship narrower than the Gospel is human Churchmanship and partial. That alone is Divinely ordered and Catholic Churchmanship which includes all those who, being baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, call Jesus Lord, and depart from iniquity.

It seems part of the grand mission of the Church of England in the present age to proclaim, without ceasing and with intense conviction, this true Catholicity of the Church of Christ. No other branch of the Catholic Church has the same opportunities as the Church of England for the fulfilment of this mission. The Roman Church has vast historical prestige, wonderful capacity for organization, whole armies of fervid men and women, separated by celibacy to lifelong devotion to the Roman cause; a power truly marvellous of claiming the strong by austerity and satisfying

the weak by accommodation ; a way of appealing to the artistic and æsthetic senses which no other Christian Communion can surpass. Even the errors and heresies of the Roman Church, which are manifold and in some instances appalling, have been fashioned with consummate skill to minister to the frailties, and assuage the fears, and tranquillize the disquietudes, and settle the doubts, and solace the yearnings, and cherish the hopes, of restless, aspiring, weary, imaginative, sin-laden souls. The worship of the Blessed Virgin and the cult of angels seems to bring a far-off God quite near, and so soften with pity the awe of His majesty. This worship seems also to add the love of celestial motherhood to that of the heavenly Fatherhood. This sweet and gentle sense of celestial motherhood means much—how much none can imagine who has not seen desolate orphans melting in tears on their knees before the shrine of some pathetic Madonna. Then, too, the Confessional, although its inevitable tendency is to weaken the will, to supersede the sovereignty of conscience, and to confuse both the sense of sin and the conditions of pardon, is yet a welcome outlet for the griefs and burdens of heavy hearts, especially hearts strongly emotional and but slightly under the sway of reason's sceptre. The very penances imposed by the

absolving priest yield a kind of satisfaction and solace to the wretched and remorseful, while the absolution itself, uttered with audible voice into listening ears, seems to multitudes, especially of the poor and ignorant, more real and palpable than promises made long centuries ago by the Redeemer Himself and His inspired Apostles.

Again, submission to authority is an indestructible element in human nature. It pervades every department of human life. Its fruits are sometimes good, sometimes evil. It is the key to the power of fashion; one secret of the lawyer's and doctor's influence; a large factor in the potency of the press; part of our composite social cement; one of the many foundations of all governments; and the whole and only basis of priestcraft in every form and every age, whether pagan, Jewish, or Christian. If vast multitudes of men, and still vaster multitudes of women, did not love to be led, to be told definitely and authoritatively what to think, where to go, whom to believe, what to do, priestcraft would be impossible. The strength of the priest lies wholly in the weakness of his followers. To this craving for authoritative direction, which is one of the most common frailties of fallen human nature, the Roman Church ministers with incomparable skill and effect. She cherishes the instinct assiduously

from their earliest years in the children of her communion. She forbids her members to read books or cultivate companionships which might disturb their acquiescence in her authority. She does not encourage even free Bible-reading. According to the well-known dictum, the business of the Bible is to prove what the Church has decreed should be taught. To the Roman Church mixed marriages are anathema. Her principal services are in the one dead language sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority, and not in the people's living vernacular. To aggrandize priestly authoritativeness, to magnify and exalt its supremacy over thought and belief, sculpture, painting, music, worship, lights, incense, vestments, every art and all manner of subtle and mighty devices, have been summoned to its aid. Right wonderful and amazing are the lengths to which human credulity will run when unrestrained by reason. The human mind is, as it were, hypnotized by credulity. It loses its independence. It sees through others' eyes, and is dominated by their suggestions. How otherwise can we account for the acceptance of tenets like those of Indulgences, Purgatory, Transubstantiation, and Infallibility; the purchase of God's free pardon in the Christ, or even the temporal concomitants of that pardon, for money; the deliverance of disembodied souls by

prayers paid for at tariff prices; the working in the Lord's Supper of a perpetual miracle which has neither revelation, nor reason, nor mercy as its sanction; the assertion of an unerring Papal wisdom to which all Papal history gives a flat contradiction? It cannot be denied that each of these tenets appeals with mighty force to some great hunger in men—the hunger to buy off the consequences of their evil doings, the hunger to help the dead, the hunger for signs, the hunger for the settlement of doubts, for escape from the torments of hard thinking, for intellectual peace even at the risk of intellectual stagnation. And yet the true appeasement of such hunger does not lie with anodynes which merely lull its pains without really satisfying its wants.

Thus it comes to pass that with all its amazing skill, its splendid organization, its marvellous accommodation to the strong yearnings and the weak cravings of mankind, the Christianity of the future cannot possibly belong to the Roman Church. Time and truth are both against it, and their resistance must ultimately prove invincible. For several centuries the Papacy has been fighting a losing battle. Time was when the Pope laid Emperors prostrate at his feet, transferred crowns, claimed territorial jurisdiction over newly discovered islands and continents, and possessed

much more than a nominal suzerainty over the entire Christian world. Now he is a voluntary prisoner within the walls of his own palace, and does not reign over a single city or province even in Italy itself. Time was when his Bulls and excommunications and anathemas made monarchs tremble and peoples quake for fear. Now they have no practical effect whatever over a large part of the Christian world. Time was when the Papal Inquisition was the most fearful of all terrors. Now if man, woman, or child were tortured or burnt for disloyalty to Papal decrees, the whole civilized world would rise in revolt against the infamy. Time was when in a great part of Europe no place of education could flourish, no religious service be held, no religious book openly read, without the concurrence and approval of the Roman authorities. Now in the most powerful realms of the Christian world universities and schools, religious services, and all departments of literature, are wholly independent of Papal connection ; while in countries still acknowledging the Roman obedience there is a great loosening of chains and an increasing fervour for emancipation. I write none of these things in a spirit of contention, far less of unkindly exultation—though, indeed, with profound thankfulness—but merely as plain, incontrovertible evidence of the decay of

Papal authority, its estrangement from the progress of humanity, its incapacity either to stem the tide of human thought or to direct it. A Church weighted with the dogma of Transubstantiation, bound with the fetters of Tridentine decrees, capable of believing in its own infallibility, whose rulers are all priests and monks, in the settlement of whose religious doctrines and the administration of whose ecclesiastical affairs the laity have neither voice nor vote, the essence of whose government is an ecclesiastical absolutism, can never be the Church of the future. As the latest centuries prove, time is against it.

And as time is against it, so also is truth. As the sovereignty of ecclesiastical absolutism is fast drawing to its end, so that of superstition is tottering. There has ever been much religious and spiritual truth in the Roman Church ; as on some supreme occasions in the strife against the unbridled licentiousness of the rich and strong, and the tyranny of the irresponsible despots of the Middle Ages, there has also been much moral force of sublime grandeur. However wide our eyes be opened to the heresies, the superstitions, the domineering autocracy, the priestly despotism of the Roman Church, it is wrong to close them to the better and nobler aspects of its history, its missionary zeal, its strivings for the faith, its

preservation of literary treasures, its care for the sick, its pity for the poor, its self-sacrifice in times of plague and pestilence, its frequent resistance to secular tyranny, its devotion to children, its general culture of domestic piety, the vast learning of some of its doctors, the sweet and gentle simplicity of many of its saints. It is part of the glory of truth to pay unstinted homage to goodness wherever found. No right cause is aided by blind and ungenerous advocates.

Still, while acknowledging to the full the goodness displayed and the truth maintained by the Roman Church, yet it must be confessed that this goodness is so overloaded with evils, and this truth with errors, that the resultant effect has been to make the Roman Church one of the greatest impediments to human progress and one of the greatest foes of Christ's religion. The proof of this is found in the unquestionable fact that the nations still dominated by Papal control are the backward nations of the civilized world—not one of them is in the van of liberty and enlightenment; and in the further fact that not a single dogma distinctive of the Roman faith—transubstantiation, a celibate ministry, the treasury of merits, auricular confession, indulgences, the necessity for priestly absolution and priestly mediation, purgatory, masses for the dead, the

co-ordination of tradition with Holy Scripture, communion in one kind only, infallibility, and other such things—was taught either by Christ or His Apostles. Not one of these dogmas forms part of Christ's religion as revealed and taught in the New Testament Scriptures. On the contrary, each of them is opposed sometimes to the letter, and invariably to the spirit, of that religion. The essence of Christ's religion is free redemption from sin to the contrite believer, direct and personal access through Him, the only Mediator, to the Father; the personal indwelling, emancipation, and illumination of the Holy Ghost in the faithful; the union of God with man and man with God in the Incarnate Christ; the abolition in Him of death, and in Him also the manifestation of immortality; the absolute certainty of our ultimate responsibility and account to God for the lives we are living here and now, together with the rights and duties, the fears and hopes, the warnings and joys, the solace and strength, which flow, of necessity, from the heavenly fountains of this most glorious religion.

It is true that, in the course of the ages, ordinances may be rightly established and truths rightly developed, which are seldom mentioned, or not even mentioned at all, in the New Testament. The silence of Scripture is not of itself

sufficient to rule out of court a Christian usage or a Christian ordinance, else would many good customs of all Churches be open to condemnation. If the silence of Scripture were of itself decisive, not only would the surplice go, but the Genevan gown also would go with it, and no Christian minister would be styled "reverend." The New Testament contains no specific liturgical rules, no particular and exclusive methods of Church government, no complete and universal forms of worship, no codes of ecclesiastical canons, not even any fully systematized creed or confession of faith. And why? Because the Church of Christ is not a fixed and dead machine, but a living society. And it is essential that a living society, like every other form of life, should be in correspondence with its environment, capable of development and adaptation to changing circumstances and growing needs, otherwise its inevitable doom would be speedy death. In Church organizations incapacity for readjustment is practically equivalent to uselessness. If a custom, once perhaps venerable and beneficent, grows obsolete or mischievous, the Church of Christ can retain no such custom. On the other hand, if a custom, upon which Scripture is silent, has been proved by experience good and wholesome, the silence of Scripture is no barrier

to the adoption and practice of that custom. Even the forms and language in which doctrinal verities are presented may rightly vary from age to age, and terms be rightly used, such as Incarnation, Trinity, and the like, which are not found in Scripture at all.

But in all such developments of Christian doctrine, all such readjustments of Christian ordinances, all such changes of Christian usages or Church government, at least three conditions must be fulfilled, otherwise great floods of error and superstition will sweep disastrously over the vineyards of the Lord. (1) No development of doctrine may run contrary to revelation and reason. (2) No readjustments may change the Scriptural proportion of the faith. (3) No ecclesiastical custom and no form of Church government may be out of line with New Testament teachings. Within the compass of these conditions a living Church has full liberty to ordain its government, settle its constitution, define its membership, arrange its worship, and proclaim its doctrines. But beyond that compass no branch of the Church of Christ has either right or power to go. God is not the Author of confusion. He cannot lie. The truths which He revealed at the birth of Christianity He cannot contradict at any subsequent period of its life and growth. Our

Lord graciously promised that the Spirit of Truth should guide His disciples into all the truth—truth ever growing, developing, bursting forth into new forms of blossom and fruit with the procession of the suns. But it is of the essence of truth to be in harmony with itself. Truth cannot contradict truth. Whatever contradicts truth is error.

The reason, therefore, why Roman developments must be rejected is not that Scripture is silent concerning them, but because they are out of line with Scripture, destroy the true proportion of the faith, and in not a few instances run clean contrary to Scripture, as in the case of transubstantiation, communion in one kind, compulsory confession and priestly absolution, obligatory fasting before partaking of the Communion, the bondage put on the Bible, the homage paid to tradition, infallibility, and the like. When you are reading Roman manuals, you are often not only reading what goes beyond Scripture, but what is not in the same plane with it—something at once incommensurate and irreconcilable with it. So, too, with the Roman Mass. It does not merely go beyond the New Testament on lines of development permissible and congruous: it goes against it, runs in the opposite direction, contradicts and overthrows it. Night is not more

different from day than the trend of Roman teaching is different from the New Testament, or the atmosphere of Roman worship from that of the primitive Church. It is as if in the physical world you had changed the source of light or the centre of gravity; had made the sun dependent on the moon and apples to fall away from the earth. Seeing that every development of Romanism, in whatever direction, whether in medieval or modern times, is nothing other than the extension of priestly power, the magnifying of priestly prerogative, the assertion of priestly privilege, the dominion of priestly will, the aggrandizement of priestly tutelage on earth, and the assumption of priestly authority after death in the world to come, it is certain that Romanism does not hold the pass to the religious realms of the future. Its pivot is the priest. On that pivot all its special doctrines, methods of worship, and forms of administration turn. Remove that pivot from its chariot-wheels and the chariot will not only come to a standstill, but will become a wreck, crushed to pieces under the weight of its own load.

That pivot is being quickly loosened by every onward movement in every part of the world From the days when the art of printing with movable metal types was invented, and Bacon's

Novum Organum was published, and political freedom gained a sure foothold, and scientific methods of testing authority and doubting appearances and demanding facts were established, and education passed from the control of ecclesiastics —above all, when the Bible was emancipated and its ideals began under the Spirit of God to exercise their sway over the spirits of men—the despotism of priestcraft has been gradually crumbling towards its fall. Desperate efforts have been made, and are still being made, to avert the catastrophe. The Tridentine authorities have fulminated their anathemas. The Jesuits have exercised all their subtlety, and have endured amazing sacrifices, to influence the press, to capture politicians and magnates and rulers. Infallibility has been proclaimed. With masterly skill the wealthy and the clerically minded have been proselytized. Devoted ladies have grandly spent themselves in schools of every grade, in hospitals and slums, to sustain the decaying edifice. Even liberty itself, of which priestcraft is the unappeasable foe, has in these latter days been summoned to her adversary's succour, so piteous has grown the plight of that adversary. In former days the policy of priestcraft did not suffer its adversaries to live; by oppression and cruelty, by force and fire, it sought to exterminate

them. That policy has ignominiously failed, and the craft which once sought the lives of others is now compelled to solicit from those others its own liberty to live. Nor should that liberty be denied it, so long as the liberty is not so abused as to be a menace to the general good. Truth is strong enough to let error run free, so long as error does not wantonly pervert its freedom to bring truth into bondage. There does not seem to me, at least, any danger that Roman errors can ever again reinstate the power of priestcraft to an extent destructive of liberty. The forces against it are too many and strong. Multitudes upon multitudes of the members of the Roman Church would rebel against any return to the ancient tyrannies. But apart from this, the whole movement of the world is towards freedom—intellectual and spiritual freedom. That movement is resistless as the flowing tide, or as the sun rising in his strength and glory. Priestcraft being a determined foe of this intellectual and spiritual freedom, and the Roman form of religion being inseparable from priestcraft—the craft that puts the priest between the soul and the Saviour—it is impossible that the Roman form of religion can be the religion of the future. The religion of the future will be the religion which comes into the closest and most direct

contact with the living Christ, which moves and has its being in Him ; which works and worships, serves mankind and glorifies God, through the might and power of personal communion with Him—not through the mediation of official priests, but by the personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

Where, then, shall we look for the Church of the future—the true Catholic Church of Christ—seeing that we cannot find it in obedience to Rome, with all its errors, superstitions, irrationalisms, and dependence on priestcraft, against which intellectual progress and spiritual enlightenment are marching forward to final victory ? The Churches of the East have had a deeply troubled career. They were the firstborn of the Gospel. Many of them were personally founded and personally instructed by Apostles themselves. Where are they now ? Their lampstand has, in most instances, been removed. Of the Eastern Churches mentioned in the New Testament not one remains to-day as a strong, living force. Internecine disputes and foreign invasions have either greatly crippled or destroyed them utterly. The Church at Jerusalem, the first of all the Churches, founded, if ever Church was founded by St. Peter himself, under the direct and manifest outpouring of the Holy Ghost, has perished as an independent missionary Church. Even the Patriarch of Jeru-

salem is subordinate to the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Christians in Jerusalem to-day belong to many differing Christian Communions, whose hostility to each other, and violent contention for the holy places, has at times to be subdued and kept under control by Moslem soldiery. It would carry us too far from our present subject to inquire into the strange fact that all the sacred places connected with the life of our Lord and the birth of His kingdom have passed away from Christian rule. Even the exact position of many of them is now indeterminable, and all are subject to Mohammedan sway. As Jehovah buried the body of Moses so that no man knoweth the place of his sepulchre unto this day, thus preventing Judaism from drifting into the idolatrous worship of dead men's bones at local shrines: so also it may be—who can tell?—that for a similar reason God has partly hidden, and partly removed from Christian possession, the Holy City and the Holy Land that Christians may learn the stupendous truth, first taught by our Lord to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, that His religion is not a local, but universal, religion; that God is Spirit, and they who would Christianly worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. However this may be, the fact is clear that none of the Churches of the East

give any promise, from their present position and character, of becoming strong and catholic enough to take the lead in the formation of the Church of the future. Even the Holy Orthodox Eastern Church is too closely bound up with the political fortunes of Russia, besides being unfitted in many other ways, to take cosmopolitan rank among Christian Churches.

The Reformed Churches of Western Europe are far stronger and healthier, more progressive in character, and apparently capable of grander possibilities than the Churches of the East. To them we largely owe much of the recent advance in religious thought, and especially of fresh and truer light upon the nature of the Holy Scriptures and their marvellous revelations of the dignity and destiny of man; of God's unsearchable love for man, and of man's mysterious privilege of consciously co-operating with God for the redemption and exaltation of the human race. But one part of these Churches is loaded with the dogma of consubstantiation, and the other with that of predestined and helplessly unavoidable spiritual doom. These two tenets, consubstantiation and predestined reprobation, are heavy clogs on the wheels of the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches respectively. They are, we believe, out of harmony with both reason and revelation;

two of the great pillars of the Church of the future.

The non-episcopal Churches of the English-speaking peoples are obviously more Catholic, more rich in spiritual possibilities, than any of the Churches hitherto mentioned. They are more open to the light of reason, more loyal to the Divine simplicity of Scriptural truth. They are hampered with no medieval traditions. Their Apostolic Creed is practically that of Nicæa. They are not harnessed to the chariots of the schoolmen. For them the Bible is the test of the orthodoxy of the Fathers : the Fathers are not the infallible interpreters of the Bible. Unlike the Church of Rome, they teach nothing contrary to the Scriptures, although, on the other hand, some of their teachings, notably those concerning the Church and the Sacraments, seem to fall short of the fulness of the Scriptural measure. Those of them who maintain Genevan teachings have for the most part brought those teachings to the bar of Scripture, and have stripped them of all the attributes inconsistent with the unfathomable mercy and love of God. In their earlier days these Churches, possibly in reaction from the miserable notions of unity prevalent in the Papal Church, disclosed a dangerous facility for division ; but in later times this tendency has been arrested, and a strong tide is setting in towards unification,

as is manifest from the recent action of branches of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. The finger of Pharisaic scorn is sometimes pointed at these Churches. Their passion for liberty is defamed as licence ; and, indeed, there have been epochs in which ecclesiastical tyranny has goaded the extreme wings of Reformed Churches into licence. But none have lamented this licence more deeply, or have sought to repress it more earnestly, than the overwhelming majority of the members of the Reformed Churches themselves. Nor at its worst has the madness of these fanatics exceeded the madness displayed in the ranks of Unreformed Churches. The vilest Anabaptist was never more vile than the vilest Inquisitor.

Then, too, the multitude of divisions among the Reformed Churches is pointed at contemptuously as an evidence of their detachment from the unity of the Church. All divisions among Christians, especially when accompanied by bitterness and faction, are truly a matter for profound, penitential regret. But where is the Church which is free from divisions ? Apostles grieved over the divisions in the Churches founded by themselves. For more than a thousand years the story of the Papal Church has been largely a story of divisions, Popes anathematizing anti-Popes, Popes cursing cardinals and cardinals Popes, one

order of monks plotting against and undermining the authority of another order, the Pontiffs in antagonism with the Jesuits, and the Jesuits struggling with the Pontiffs until they gained the mastery over them. To the historian there is no figment more palpable than the loudly proclaimed unity of the Roman Church. To say nothing of earlier Councils, who that knows anything of the latest Vatican Council, or of the election of Popes in even recent times, can be ignorant of the internal divisions in the Roman Church? And what also of the English Church? There is more real difference and distance, less unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, between members of the English Church Union and members of the Church Association, than between the different branches of either the Methodist or the Presbyterian Communions. The distinction between Roman differences and other differences is not that the former are fewer or less real than the latter, but that they are more carefully hidden out of sight and covered over with a thin veneer of uniformity. All Romanists, indeed, profess allegiance to one single Pontiff. But as all Christian communities confess allegiance to Christ, and as allegiance to Christ is immeasurably more important and more vital than allegiance to the Pope, it follows that the unity among all the differing

Churches who confess the Christ is a truer and more living unity than the unity of allegiance to the Pope. In so far as Romanists derive their unity from allegiance to the Pope it is a merely outward ecclesiastical uniformity; in so far as they owe their unity to their life in Christ, and their love of Him, they have their share, but only their share, in that grander unity of the whole Catholic and Apostolic Church which is the true Body of Christ, of which all Christian Communions are equally members.

The Church of the future will not be a mechanically uniform Church. Its lay members will not be as pawns in a game moved at the will of priests. It will be a Church of great diversities of custom, and many varieties of worship; and within the limits of Holy Scripture different ways of setting forth religious verities. Necessarily this will be so; because the Church of the future will be both human and divine. On its human side it will give expression to the ever-growing developments of human thought, the ever-changing character of human needs. It will be diverse as the highest aspirations and the deepest wants of mankind. Like the beauty of spring or the richness of harvest its manifold elements will be countless in their diversities; but one in their origin, and one also in their aim, which is the spiritual nourish-

ment and exaltation of mankind. Because the Church of the future will be both more human and more Godlike than the Church of the past, therefore in its comprehensive and Catholic unity there will be greater mental and spiritual variety. If there were no other evidence of the enormous distance which the Roman Church has travelled from the purity of the primitive evangel, the demand which that Church makes for a cast-iron uniformity of discipline and usage would of itself be evidence enough. Nothing could be less like the pictures of Christian unity portrayed in the New Testament Scriptures than the unity prescribed by the Vatican authorities. Scriptural unity is unity of will, unity of work, unity of love, unity of life: a unity resembling that of the Eternal Father with the Eternal Son, or of the redeeming Bridegroom with His loving, deeply cherished bride. But nothing is more conspicuous in this Divine unity than the absence of mechanical uniformity. Godlike unity is the unity of a tree in which no two leaves are alike; of a family of which each child has its own personality; of a body of which every member has a different character and a different office. Roman unity is unity of drill; Divine unity the unity of love. Drill has its uses, but in excess they tend towards the suppression of personality.

Love yields an obedience more resolute, more ardent, more victorious than drill ; and yet at the same time an obedience which foments rather than quenches personal development.

If, then, the Church of the future will be a Church in which diversities of thought and usage will be not less conspicuous than the unity of love and service, what are some of the hindrances in the path of that Church in the present day ? As thought progresses, as mankind grows more and more enlightened, the desire for a uniform Church grows weaker and weaker ; and that for a Church with many diversities, yet at unity with itself, stronger and stronger. How then, I ask, can this unity be attained ? Owing to the limitation of my available space I leave out of reckoning in this paper the conditions of unity requisite to be fulfilled by the Eastern Churches, the Papal Church, the Reformed Continental Churches, the old Catholics, and the Roman Modernists, before they can take leading parts in the constitution of the Church of the future. My hope is that one and all of them will in course of time, under the operation of the Holy Ghost, shake off their various hindrances and unite in the formation, not of a merely nominal, but a most real and actual, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ. Omitting, then, for the present, these Churches,

I proceed to inquire what are the hindrances in the path of those other Churches which possess the most hopeful promise for the making of the Church of the future?

These other Churches I take to be, broadly speaking, the Church of England and the English Nonconformist Churches. These Churches already enjoy an intimate and most essential relationship. They are immeasurably nearer to each other than either to the Church of Rome or the Eastern Churches. In all the fundamentals of the Christian faith—the truths and beliefs necessary to salvation—they are in practical harmony. Their errors are fewer and less vital than those of other Churches. In the Church of England, indeed, during the last sixty years, there has been a partial recrudescence of medieval superstitions and of ecclesiastical efforts to reintroduce medieval customs and disturb the Scriptural proportion of the faith. But these superstitions, based on priestcraft, are foreign to the genius of the Reformed English Church. They cannot be proved by Holy Scripture; they are at war with reason and are against revelation, and are, therefore, not only not of the essence of Anglican teaching, but in absolute opposition to it. Either by rupture or decay the Church of England is sure in time to get rid of these alien

elements; for it is impossible for a Church whose great charter is the Bible to tolerate for ever either teachings or usages of which the contriver is the priest.

On the other hand, the Nonconformist Churches have in recent times discovered a tendency towards undue political bias. All true Christianity should exercise a real influence on politics, but it should be the influence of grand and sacred principles, not of narrow secular partisanship. We want religion everywhere and at all times in our politics; but politics nowhere and never in our religion. The inevitable and dread result of political partisanship in religion is to despiritualize it. This result, we are told, is being increasingly felt at present in some Nonconformist Churches; and is bitterly lamented by their best and noblest members. And yet this political partisanship is contrary to the origin and purpose of Nonconformity. In some instances the rise of Nonconformist Churches was due to their anti-Erastianism—their resolve to constitute spiritual communities free from political control. In others the rise was due either to the reverence for liberty of conscience or to a great hunger for a more simple Gospel, a great thirst for a deeper spiritual life. And as I have no doubt that the Church of England will cleanse itself in

time from anti-Scriptural customs and teachings, so have I no doubt that the Nonconformist Churches will soon return to their first love, will throw off their political fetters, and become once again splendid heralds of the spiritual truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord.

When these two great consummations have been reached, when the Church of England is completely de-Romanized, and the Nonconformist Churches are completely respiritualized, what are the hindrances which will still remain in the way of their reunion? The two greatest will be episcopacy and establishment. The former is absolutely essential to the English Church; the latter, however desirable and beneficent for the sake of historical continuity and Christian comprehensiveness, and national well-being, yet is not of the essence of the life of the English Church. These two great issues will have to be faced, and faced without flinching, before there can be corporate reunion between the Conforming and the Nonconforming Churches. These questions can never be solved by diplomatic fencing, by beating round the bush, by unreal and unsatisfying compromise. They are questions involving great principles on both sides; and only by the frank recognition, and clear statement of these principles will the final and full solution be reached.

Amongst other things Churchmen will have to decide whether or not by episcopacy they mean only and solely monarchical episcopacy, and Nonconformists whether or not by disestablishment they mean the cessation of the national recognition of God in assemblies and ceremonies of State, in the education of children in the public schools, and particularly whether or not they mean to substitute the congregation for the parish as the unit of ministerial responsibilities and the centre of ministerial activities. These questions are preliminaries vital to all considerations of corporate union between the Church of England and the Nonconformist Churches, just as that union is vital to the formation of the grand Catholic Apostolic Church of the future.

Meanwhile and long before these two great questions of episcopacy and establishment can get themselves settled, there are many minor questions which may be usefully debated and brought to a workable solution. The Church of England has many things to learn in richer fulness from Nonconformists: such as the extension of lay government and ministry, more cordial relationships between Church members, spiritual *esprit de corps*, the value of unwritten, even *extempore* prayers, the art of preaching, the realized

fellowship of believers, the importance of individual consecration, the unspeakable joy of direct spiritual access to God. On the other hand, there are many things which Nonconformists may learn from the Church of England. The value of the parochial system is beyond all calculation in ministerial work. Again, a lineage of long centuries of historical continuity is not, we know, essential to a Church's life and vigour, but it has great charm and power over multitudes of thoughtful men. Ceremonials of worship, too, which engage the imagination and appeal to the artistic and æsthetic side of man's psychical constitution are not illegitimate servitors of true religion. Temples and sanctuaries which in their sublime magnificence and reverent splendour suggest something, at least, of the wonder and glory of God are aids to spiritual exaltation, and outward helps to inward awe. It is by no means necessary that our sacred buildings should be bare and beggarly in order to be exempt from superstition. A Book of Common Prayer—common to all classes, and to every clime and quarter of the earth—is a strong and happy instrument for promoting the sense of brotherhood, for procuring a delightful liberty from the bondage of ministerial idiosyncrasies, and for creating a realization of spiritual nearness between those

sundered by physical distance. There is also a scope of intellectual and spiritual liberty in the Church of England of which few are aware who are not within her pale. Comprehensiveness is one of her principal and most attractive characteristics. Some Churches exalt authority at the expense of reason; others glorify reason at the expense of authority; but I know of no Church which combines the authority of reason with the reasonableness of authority, and both with revelation, in the same degree and with such justice of proportion as the Church of England. Then, too, there is a definiteness about the Sacramental teachings of the English Church which is lacking in some Nonconformist Churches, and which supplies great fulness to her teachings and great richness to her spiritual strength. In these and other directions there are lessons touching both faith and practice, doctrines and ordinances, which Nonconformists could advantageously learn from closer association with the English Church.

It is in this closer association of the Reformed Church of England with the Reformed Nonconformist Churches that I believe the germ of the Church of the future will ultimately be found. The fundamental truths, the essential revelations of Christianity, must always remain the same—yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Like their

Unchangeable Source, they cannot change. But their manifestations are new every morning, Their applications to the needs and ways of men, to the mental, moral, social, and spiritual progress of the race, must be perpetually varying. The modes of worship of the primitive Christian times would be anachronistic now. In medieval times medieval forms of worship, medieval customs and ordinances played their part and did their work. It is difficult to see how the Church of the Middle Ages could more effectively have counteracted the feudal powers of secular lords and overlords than by setting up a feudalistic ecclesiastical constitution of its own. The secular tyrannies of feudalism in those ages could be best overthrown by spiritual forces organized on feudal lines. The cardinal mistake of the Roman Church has been, not that in the feudal age she was feudally organized and feudally strong, but that she has sought to stereotype her feudal institutions and make them permanent for all ages, and has encouraged ignorant superstitions and invented a whole succession of traditions, decretals, and dogmas, to prop up those institutions after their purpose was served and their very existence had grown obsolete. As at present constituted the Church of Rome is generically a Church of the past, and can never be part of the

grand Catholic Church of the future until she breaks free from the fetters of her feudalism and renounces the errors and superstitions with which she is now endeavouring to sustain her crumbling walls.

The vice of immobility is a vice common to all Churches in varying degrees. Ecclesiastical institutions are the last and most reluctant of all institutions to adapt themselves to changing circumstances and changing times. And to some extent it is well this should be so. For the surest progress is always made on conservative lines. By preserving and cherishing whatever is good in the past we best secure that the unfolding future shall be better. To tear plants up by the roots is not the way to bring forth to perfection their blossoms and fruits. The new graft on the old stock grows often the most rich in loveliness. Similarly with institutions. There are times, indeed, in their history when their rottenness is so complete that nothing short of a root-and-branch reformation can save and make them whole; times when even the Brazen Serpent, once the symbol and instrument of salvation, must be ground to powder lest it should foment idolatry. But such drastic remedies are needed only in cases of deadly disease. As a rule reform is better than revolution. And what is reform?

It is sometimes the introduction of new principles into practice; but more often it is the enlargement and readaptation of old principles to new requirements. Such reforms are both truly conservative and truly progressive. They contain both the elements of permanence and elasticity. They strengthen what is enduring, shake off what is obsolete, and prepare the way for advancement to higher ends.

Many such reforms will be needed in existing ecclesiastical institutions and ways of formulating Christian thought and belief before the Church of the future can be firmly established as the pillar of truth and the trusted guide for men. Take only two instances out of many. Who, e.g., that takes note of the movements of the human mind, or looks for reunion between Nonconformist Churches and the Church of England, or reflects on the action of the American and the Irish Episcopal Churches, can suppose that the Creed commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius will be among the *Credenda* of the Church of the future? As a relic of its own age it is an intensely interesting symbol. As a crusading lyric it is incomparable. As an historic survival of a form of passion which holy devotion once assumed it is as precious as the imprecatory psalms. And in the same sense in which Christians to-day can

sing the imprecatory psalms they can also recite the Athanasian Creed. But the day is at hand when neither the one nor the other will constitute part of the symbolism and psalmody of the Church of Christ. We can enter into the feelings of the exiled captives who in their utter desolation could exult in the thought of Babylonish little children being taken and dashed in pieces upon the rocks; but Christ has put an end to all such feelings in His true disciples. We can enter also into the feelings of those warrior Christians who trembling for the security of their orthodox Trinitarian faith, and realizing its inestimable preciousness, could raise the battle-cry of an indubitable everlasting torment as the doom of their heretical foes; but the slow development of Christian love has made these feelings impossible now among those who have learned that the greatest of all Christian virtues is charity. Even among those who cling most strenuously to the Athanasian Creed I doubt if there is now left one, so uninfluenced by the general growth of Christian gentleness, who, if he had the power, would condemn father, sister, child, wife, or mother, to perish everlastingly because of unbelief in any or all of the profoundly metaphysical, and in the case of the vast majority of people utterly unintelligible, propositions of the Athanasian Creed.

Yet these good, kindly people, in their ecclesiastical conservatism, find no difficulty in attributing to God, who is Love, feelings and actions which they would deem unworthy in themselves. So strange and strong is the blinding power of ecclesiasticism—a power from which the Church of the future, if it is to exist at all, must shake itself absolutely free.

The second and only other reform for which I have now space to make mention is the Church's attitude towards death. The slowness of the Christian Church in learning even the first rudiments of the Christian religion has been nothing less than marvellous. If one announcement was placarded more prominently on the banner of Christian revelation than another, it was that our blessed Saviour, by His resurrection, has abolished death ; not, indeed, the fact of it, but the curse of it and the entire system of old beliefs concerning it. The old belief was that " as a tree falls so it lies " ; that the dead praise not God ; that there is no remembrance in death nor any giving of thanks in the grave. By three grand strokes Jesus Christ abolished all these old mistakes concerning death. On the Mount of Transfiguration He talked with Moses and Elias about His decease which He should shortly accomplish at Jerusalem. On the Cross He promised to one of

His fellow-sufferers that before sunset they would be in Paradise together. On the third day after His crucifixion He rose again—the same but glorified. By these three strokes the Redeemer rent the veil from death as manifestly as by His death He rent the veil from the hidden Mercy Seat. Yet how slowly, how almost reluctantly, the Christian Church has assimilated this sublime and stupendous truth into her daily consciousness. No doubt the perversion of this grand verity by the Roman system into a mighty engine of priestly control and most lucrative traffic has hindered the Reformed Churches from accepting it in all its strengthening and refreshing power. But the perversion of a truth is no just ground for neglecting it. I sometimes think the Evil One invented purgatory in order to place impediments in the way of man's realization of Christ's conquest of death and of the nearness of the paradisaical to our present life. If this be so, then in more ways than one purgatory has proved one of his most successful inventions for the hindrance of the Gospel of the Resurrection. However this may be, the thankworthy fact remains that science in several of its departments is now coming to the aid of the Gospel and is demonstrating with ever-increasing force the irrationality of supposing that death is the *terminus ad quem* of human life, or

that there is neither remembrance, nor further ascent beyond the grave. And this, I think, will be one of the most influential and beneficent convictions of the Church of the future as it was of the Church of Apostolic times.

To sum up. I have endeavoured in this essay to set forth the grounds of my belief that the Church of the future will be a grander and more glorious Church than the world has ever yet beheld—a Church visible on earth in its influence and fruits, and connected by a realization of living communion with the Church invisible ; that it will be a Church emancipated from all the manifold fetters of medieval priestcraft, a Church truly Catholic because truly Apostolic, ever developing but never on anti-Scriptural lines ; a Church with great diversity of ordinances and methods of worship but always at unity in itself and with its Heavenly Head. The first steps towards this unity will be made, I believe, by the Church of England and the English Nonconformists, after considerable purgation by both of their outstanding blemishes and defects. By degrees I hope all other Churches will join this great Catholic Union : those whose errors are fewest, first ; those that, like the Roman Church, are most in error, last. The process of reunion will probably be hindered rather than hastened by premature

attempts at external manifestations such as exchange of pulpits and the like. Meanwhile, in all personal and social relations let Christians of every denomination and of all the Churches cultivate the freest and most friendly intercourse. Let them study their differences and study also their harmonies, as the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, and some Nonconformist Churches in England, are now happily doing. Let them cling with a great loyalty to their past history, yet let not their past history be a clog on the wheels of their future development. Above all, let them pray for each other in the Holy Ghost, that He would guide them into all the truth and fill them with most holy love. Then in God's own time will the Church of the future look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and, in its warfare against falsehood and sin, terrible as an army with banners.

V

THE SPIRITUAL REFORMATION OF THE CLERGY

IN all ages the heart of man remains fundamentally the same. Outward appearances and visible surroundings differ; but man's inner constitution, his tendencies and appetites, remain unchanged. This is why the things which were written aforetime are capable of instructing us. If the men of the New Testament age had been constitutionally different from ourselves, then the writings of the New Testament, however helpful to them, would have been useless to us: but because the heart of man in all ages is essentially the same (is possessed by the same appetites, divided by the same discords, governed by the same propensions), therefore in the history of the first age of Christianity we read lessons applicable to ourselves. The writings of the New Testament are not a mere temporary, but an ever-abiding, storehouse of spiritual inspiration and reproof.

A glance at the first portion of St. Paul's first

Epistle to the Corinthians is enough to show how true this statement is of the difficulties and the dangers which beset the office and the labours of the ministry of Christ. For we find from this Epistle that there were congregational contentions and ministerial preferences among the Corinthians just as there are contentions and preferences among ourselves. As now, one man says he is of Wesley, and another of Calvin, and another of Luther: so then, one said he was of Paul, and another of Apollos, and another of Cephas. Some ran after the preaching of Paul, others after the preaching of Apollos, and so jealousies and strifes were multiplied.

Against these contentions, this preference for one preacher rather than another, St. Paul lifted up the condemning voice of inspiration. The Holy Ghost enabled him to see that this running after preachers, this habit of labelling themselves with party names in which the Corinthians indulged, was not Christianity at all: nay, that it was the renunciation of Christianity altogether. To call themselves Paulines, or Apollosenes, or Cephasenes, was to put Christ in the background, if not to abnegate Him utterly. Paul was enabled also to see, what every spiritually-minded man in some measure also sees, that if preaching is listened to simply because it is eloquent and popular, then

preaching, instead of being the power of God unto salvation, becomes the conceit of man unto condemnation. It tickles the fancy, but it paralyses the soul.

The Evil One knows well that there are multitudes of persons whom he cannot successfully tempt with gross and carnal allurements: so he tempts, and alas! often tempts them successfully, in more subtle and less obvious ways. He turns their very profession of Christianity into a source of jealousy, and contention, and bitterness. He makes them believe that their salvation depends on the sect to which they belong, or the shibboleth which they are able to pronounce. He pins their faith to the skirts of this preacher or that. Anything, so that anyhow the Cross of Christ is obscured; and Christians are made to stumble into the pitfalls of sectarian jealousy.

Against these itching preferences for particular preachers and these conflicting fashions in congregational religion, Paul lifted up the voice of inspiration with mighty and indignant power. Is Christ divided? he asks. Was Paul crucified for you? Were ye baptized into the name of Paul? What is Apollos? And what is Paul? Are they the Messiah? No! they are ministers: instruments through whom ye believed. Paul plants and Apollos waters: but that is all they

can do. They cannot vitalize the seed: or make the quickened seed to grow. Neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Let then, he says, a man so account of us, not as popular preachers or as brilliant orators, but as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.[1] Not the eloquence of the Apostle but the death of the Lord, not the rhetoric of the preacher but the redemption through the Cross: these alone are mighty to save. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. And if any man buildeth on this foundation" either the wood or hay or stubble huts of sectarian differences; or the gold and silver and costly edifices of eloquent preaching and religious display—"each man's work shall be made manifest: for the Day shall declare it"; the Judgment-Day, the Day of Fire which shall expose all fashionable insincerities, and burn up all sectarian differences.

This was the spirit in which St. Paul met the religious contentions and the religious superficialities of the Corinthian Church: a stern spirit,

[1] In the New Testament mysteries are either (1) things once secret but now revealed (cf. Romans xvi. 25, 26), or (2) things still secret and yet to be revealed (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 51).

a spirit which asserted Christ as the only foundation of Christianity. He appealed from the religious frivolities and bickerings of Christians to the dread, the fiery tribunal of the Judgment-Seat of Christ. And we, of this age, seem to need a spirit as sternly inspired and as apostolically faithful to revive and re-exalt the living Christ: and to pronounce their awful doom upon our own religious frivolities and our own religious strifes. For after nineteen centuries of Christianity, Christendom is still honeycombed with the rival contentions of the Churches, and with the manifest unrealities of the average Christian life: and so a new reformation of religion is required:—not so much a reformation of Church Government and official liturgies as a reformation which shall convert our sectarian contentions into spiritual peace, and our individual unrealities and insincerities into honesty and truth.

Where, then, shall this new reformation begin? It cannot make a better beginning than amongst the ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God. The clergy are, thank God, far more spiritual than they were a century ago. But they are not yet half spiritual enough. Clerical contentions and the *odium theologicum* are the bane of the Christian ministry to-day. And how can we reasonably expect an unbelieving laity to be

persuaded, and won, to a living belief in the Living Christ by a ministry which is fighting and bickering about ceremonies and shibboleths ; to the neglect of the Holy Cradle and the Redeeming Cross, the Triumphant Tomb and the Judgment Seat ? Look at the so-called religious newspapers of any church or denomination. These newspapers are largely supported by ministers of religion : and what do they contain ? There is generally the political and social news of the week which is mostly harmless. Then there is an abundance of ecclesiastical gossip which would be sufficiently innocent if the reading of it were not frequently such a trivial waste of accountable time. Then, besides a variety of other incidental matter, there are the leading articles and the correspondence columns. The letters reveal the spirit of the many ministers who write to these newspapers, and the leading articles reveal the spirit in which the newspapers are conducted. Many of the leading articles are doubtless excellent, but of others I will say only this :—that if the spirit of the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians is divine, then the spirit of these articles, which is the contradiction of that spirit, must be the opposite of divine. And what is a large proportion of the letters in these newspapers generally about ? What are the topics

which, to judge from these letters, mainly interest so many religious ministers? It is, you will very often find, some ecclesiastical frivolity about which they write: some atom of ceremonial mint or anise or cumin. It is seldom anything even remotely bearing upon mercy, judgment, and truth. Compare the best of the letters in the best of the religious newspapers with the letters of the New Testament, and you will then see whether the subjects about which the modern minister writes are in any, and to what, degree the same as the subjects upon which Apostles wrote. I speak now not of the inspired method of dealing with subjects, but of the subjects themselves—ceremonies and shibboleths and crotchets on the one hand: righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost on the other—and I ask whether it is not evident that we need a religious reformation among the clergy, a reformation from ecclesiastical frivolity and unreality to Apostolic earnestness and depth and truth. Before the laity can be widely won to Christianity the clergy must become more spiritual, more earnest, more real, more true; more forgetful of themselves, more devoted to others: more indifferent to the praise of men, more careful of the praise of God.

I know how hard, almost insuperably hard, this reformation of the clergy will be to the clergy

themselves. We clergy are but men : with all the faults and failings and sins of our fellow-men. Our ordination removes none of the appetites, or propensions, or even turpitudes, incident to human nature. After our ordination we are exactly the same men which we were before. Nothing is changed except our office. And even that office (apostolic, sacred, glorious as it is) is yet an office abounding in special, and peculiar, perils. No man can possibly realize the difficulties and the perils of the ministerial office except by actually experiencing them. Only a clergyman can understand a clergyman's temptations. There is a perilous solitude about his office : a solitude which, to some extent, cuts him off from full and free intercourse with his fellow-men. The very height and glory of his profession tend to create and to foster in him a sense of caste : with the prejudices of caste, the narrowness of caste, the impatience and haughtiness of caste. Then, too, he is more subject than most men to the softening perfumes of flattery on the one hand, and the biting winds of petty insolence on the other. His work often is among the poor and the sick and the dependent—far more often than among his equals—and out of the very nature of his work there frequently springs forth the mood and temperament of patronage. In the discharge of his

most conspicuous public duties—the ministry of the Word and Sacraments—he stands alone, differently dressed from his fellow-worshippers. Whether in the pulpit, or at the Holy Table, his position is unique: necessarily, yet also dangerously, unique.

No man, I say, can possibly understand the temptations and the dangers of such a position who has not learned them in the school of experience. Nor are the dangers I have enumerated by any means the only dangers constantly besetting the wholesome, healthy development of the clergyman's spiritual character and spiritual influence. Multitudes of other spiritual difficulties crowd around the clergyman; but, at present, I will mention only one. It is a difficulty not felt by careless clergymen. It is a difficulty whose intensity increases with the clergyman's increasing earnestness. It is the difficulty of maintaining, with absolute honesty, the right relation between himself as a minister and himself as a man: the difficulty of preserving the true proportion between his official and his social life. It is a difficulty which grows greater with the process of the years. As the years pass by, and the earnest-hearted pastor feels increasingly conscious that both he himself and the people whom he loves are fast hastening towards the portals of death and the

eternal state, his heart is stirred with deeper and deeper yearnings for their salvation. His thoughts of the world to come burn more vividly, and his lips, in the pulpit, are touched with a more living, more seraphic fire, from the altar of God. Like lava-streams his pulpit-words flow glowing down ; but then, just then, the difficulty comes. How is the due relation to be maintained between this pulpit fire and the common conversations of daily life ? Are the pulpit flames to be quenched and the pulpit ideals to be lowered ? If the clergyman is not to withdraw from Society altogether, is he to go into Society and there strive to maintain the same glow of spiritual fervour which inflames him in the pulpit, or is he to go into Society and there, having first banked up his spiritual fires, to leave them smouldering, yet ready at any moment to be stirred into living flame, and to then join in the mirth and tastes and interests of his fellow-men ? The last seems to be the right course to take. For to withdraw from Society altogether would be to turn hermit, and to abstract from the world some of its most hallowing influences ; and to go into Society simply as a preacher would be to run the risk of perpetual cant, both on the part of the preacher and on the part of Society. Therefore to go into Society and join in all its innocent recreations and inter-

ests, but to be ready always, if occasion should demand, to give light and warmth from the spiritual fires smouldering within the heart—this seems for the minister of Christ the wisest and the truest course.

But even this course is not without difficulty. For when a clergyman enters heartily, and merrily, into the social life of his fellow-men, there seems such an enormous difference between his words in the pulpit and his words in the house or the street; that either his words in the pulpit appear to be over-wrought and insincere, or his words in the house to be artificial and superficial. The distance, and the dissimilarity between the two kinds of speech is so great that it is almost impossible to avoid the appearance of unreality on one side or the other, though in fact both may be equally real and equally true.

These are some of the difficulties which beset the calling of a clergyman, and make the *spiritual* reformation of that calling so exceedingly difficult. Yet I am sure of this, the clergy must become, by some means, more spiritual, before the world will become less worldly. And I know of no means so well calculated to promote the spiritual reformation of the clergy as the realization—the keen constant realization—that they are the Messengers of the Advent: the preachers of

Christ's Past Advent to save, and His Future Advent to judge, the world. Other splendid motives for earnestness in their work the clergy have—the Apostolic succession of their ministry, the glory of their stewardship of the mysteries of God, the sublime character of their custody of the Word and the Sacraments—but none of these motives is comparable, either in splendour or force, to the motive of striving to prepare the world for the reappearing of the Lord. What we clergy need is a more intense and more awful realization of the tremendous fact that, at the dread time of Christ's reappearing, nothing will justify us—neither the verdict of man nor the acquittal of conscience—but the sentence of Christ alone: "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. It is a very small thing to be judged of man's judgment: yea! though I know nothing against myself, yet am not I hereby justified. No! He alone Who judgeth me is the Lord." And when He cometh to judge "He will bring to light both the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts."

It is only the Living Christ Who can, through His Holy Spirit, put life into the labours of the ministers of His Church. Both Church and ministers are instruments. As the body is dead

without the head : so the Church is dead without the Christ. We think too much and talk too much about the Church in these modern times : we think too little and speak too little about the Christ. In the New Testament the word Christ is used at least five times as often as the word Church. In modern sermons and ecclesiastical newspapers the emphasis is inverted and the word Church is used far more than five times as often as the word Christ : thus affording one of many evidences of the reversal, or at least the neglect, in modern Christendom of the proportion of New Testament Christianity. Another of these instances may be seen in the conception of their office commonly found among the clergy. They regard themselves and style themselves as "priests of the Church." And so, in the presbyteral sense, they are. But this is neither their highest title, nor their primary function. Apostles nowhere designate themselves either "priests of the Church," or "ministers of the Church." Let a man so account of us, they said, as "the ministers of Christ." They were not indifferent to the care of the Churches; but they knew that life and power can flow only from the Head of the Church, which is Christ Himself. The body is the channel through which the streams of spiritual life flow from the Head ; but the Head is the

source and fountain of that life. And all true, light-bringing, life-imparting clergy are primarily ministers of the Fountain, which is Christ. It is their secondary office to be ministers of the Church and attend to the streams.

Many are the reformations needed among the clergy—reformations in their modes of thinking reading and speaking, in prompt business-like habits, in the practice of applying the teachings of Christianity to the every-day doings of ordinary life—but none of these reformations is comparable in value and power to their spiritual reformation. One clear sign of the crying need of this reformation is, as I have indicated already, their too frequent references in conversations and sermons to the Church, and their too infrequent references to the Christ. In the constitution of man his body is an important factor; but any culture which overduly emphasizes the importance of the body is detrimental to the well-being of the mind and affections and all the other components of the higher man. Such culture may make athletes and fighters, but it cannot make thinkers and saints. So is it with Christianity. Any Christian culture which unduly emphasizes the Church—i.e. the Body of Christ—is detrimental to the highest spiritual well-being of Christians. Such culture may make controversialists and

sectarians, but not holy men, full-grown spiritual men, men after the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. It is a sign of the decadence both of individual Christians and of collective communities when they over-exalt the Church, which is the Body of Christ, to the obscuration of the Head, which is the Christ Himself. The development in themselves of the consciousness of the Christ at all times, in all places, and in all things on the part of the clergy would lead at length to the growth among the people at large of a similar divine consciousness. It is this spiritual development, spiritual training, spiritual power, which is the deepest of all the needs of the Church of Christ at the present day.

VI

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHMANSHIP

N the New Testament great elasticity is displayed in the use of the term Church. We ad of the Church in a house, in a neighbourhood, city, a province; and, above all, as including and excelling all, of the Church which is the body of Christ: the fulness of Him that filleth all things. But throughout this large variety of usage there runs in every instance the thought, yea, the necessity, of the Church's incorporation with the Christ; an incorporation by Sacrament and faith, by devoted love and perpetual service. Baptism and belief; departure from iniquity and fellowship with the brethren; these always appear in the New Testament as the characteristic notes of Christian Churchmanship. Where these are, the Church is; where these are not, neither is the Church.

And when we inquire into the nature of these characteristic notes of the New Testament Church-

manship, we find them all alike marked by two chief attributes, viz., comprehensiveness and simplicity. Baptism in the New Testament, like the twin Sacrament of the Supper, is a very vast and simple thing. First administered only to adult converts, as is necessarily the case in all missionary enterprise, it was both the sign and the seal of belief in Jesus as Messiah, Saviour, and King. Sometimes this baptism was accompanied or followed by the laying-on of hands. But there is no mention of this manual imposition either in our Lord's own formula of initiation into Christian discipleship or in such accounts of great conversions as that on the Day of Pentecost. The ordinance of confirmation, therefore, although sanctioned by Scripture, is nowhere by Scripture commanded. It is a beautiful and fruitful ordinance when confirmees are old enough and earnest enough to work together with God for its spiritual benefits; and we of the Church of England are unspeakably thankful for it. We know the greatness of its opportunity and its gift. We believe it to be in accordance with the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. We would not part with it at any price. Yet taking Scripture as our guide, we can never truly say or teach that the unconfirmed, solely because they lack the laying-on of hands, are beyond the bounds of the Christian

Church, or should be denied any, even the most sacred, Christian privileges.

And as with baptism, so with belief. That also in the primitive Church was absolutely grand, both in its comprehensiveness and simplicity. Such traces of creeds as we find in the New Testament are conspicuous for their brevity, their immensity, and their affectionateness. Belief in God as the compassionate Father of all men ; in Jesus Christ as the self-sacrificing Redeemer of the lost ; in the Holy Ghost as the fire of hatred for all things evil, and the inspiring breath of devotion to all things pure and good. This is the fundamental and only necessary creed of New Testament Churchmanship. Such a creed is rather a personal consecration of heart and will than an assent to any proposition, or series of propositions, accepted by the intellect.

In truth, the knowledge which saves is nowhere represented in the Bible as intellectual knowledge. Saving knowledge is of the kind which the shepherd has of the sheep. It is personal intimacy, personal care, personal service, personal love. This is life eternal, to know the Only True God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent ; with the knowledge that friend has of friend, child of parent, wife of husband. Every one that loveth knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not

God, for God is Love. The true importance of the question, " What think ye of Christ ? " lies not so much on its intellectual side—though this cannot be rightly underrated—as on its affectionate side. In religion, indeed, opinions of any kind are valueless, unless they lead to emotion, and from emotion on to adoration and service. The New Testament creeds, then, were personal passions, fearless enthusiasms. They were not dead opinions about the nature of God, but dynamic convictions of His personal power, righteousness, mercy, love. They were not dead opinions about Jesus Christ ; but tremendous realizations that in Him men had seen the character and express image of the All-Father, the Death-bringer to sin, the Life-bringer to righteousness, the future final Judge of both quick and dead. They were not dead opinions about the Holy Ghost ; but the profound and blessed experience that in Him alone, yet from Him assuredly, will come to individuals and mankind all loftiest aspirations and noblest ideals, all goodness and righteousness and truth.

The difference between this primitive creed, this New Testament symbol of discipleship or Churchmanship—for in the New Testament the two terms are practically synonymous—and later creeds and modern symbols is immeasurable ;

immeasurable not only in degree, but also in kind. The farther we move from the age of Christ and His Apostles, the farther also we move from the pure simplicity and comprehensive affection of the Christian faith. The earlier the creed, the shorter and more catholic it is; the later the creed, the longer is it and the more exclusive. The earliest creeds were the expression of historic fact, of personal relationship, of personal affection; the latest are largely the subtle reticulations of schoolmen, and sometimes also the fierce embodiment of ecclesiastical narrowness. The dominant notes of the first creeds are inclusion and love; of the last, exclusion and anathema. Instead of being a bond of union between Christians, the more modern the creed the more prolific is it as a cause of division, a source of faction, a fount of bitterness. It is possible, nay, probable, that in their day some of these later creeds may have served good ends. Against the reticulations of heresy it may have been wise to oppose the reticulations of orthodoxy. In times of war, or in a state of siege, the normal conditions of life are temporarily suspended. Martial law is proclaimed, and reigns supreme. But to make martial law permanent in times of peace is the ruin of peace and the sure incitement to rebellion; while a perennial state of siege is a perennial state of

danger, misery, and want. It seems, therefore, certain that in so far as creeds are complex and belligerent, they are dissimilar from the earliest creeds, and that until we return to the simplicity and affectionateness of the New Testament creeds, we have no reason to hope for, no right to claim, the promise of the Saviour that He will draw all men unto Him. For it is He, and He alone, when lifted up, Who attracts unto Himself with the irresistible power of a divine personal affection, universal humanity. The more complex the creed, the more it obscures the Christ. The simpler the creed and the more clearly it displays the Christ the swifter and grander will be its conquest of mankind. It was the enthusiasm of simple devotion and personal love which wrought such wonders in the Apostolic age. It is the substitution of metaphysical subtleties for adoring affection which has been one principal cause of the absence of those wonders in subsequent ages. In simplicity and love lies the secret of Catholic Churchmanship ; in complexity and exclusiveness lies schism.

Again, the morals of the Gospel are simple morals appealing to the universal conscience of man. Their foundation is the bed-rock of love. To love God with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul, all our strength, and our fellow-men, of

every race and degree, as ourselves—this is the sum and substance, the royal law, of Christian morals. Mercy, justice, truth; these are the touchstones of all genuine Christian integrity. Ecclesiastical morals are often of a quite different type, of an altogether different mould, from these. Sometimes they are of no more worth than the washing of cups and platters, the external whitenings of sepulchres. Sometimes, indeed, they are worse than worthless; as, for instance, when they run right contrary to such fundamental teachings of our Lord as that which declares that what goes into the belly of a man is far less defiling than what proceeds from his heart and mouth. I have nothing to say against the practice of fasting Communion for those who find in fasting a disciplinary preparation, a physical means of spiritual invigoration; but to elevate fasting to the sphere of morals, to say that a communion received with a true penitent heart, a lively faith, a thankful spirit, cannot be as valid, as blessed, after a meal as before, at midday or evening as in the early breakfastless morn, is to belittle, materialize, and de-spiritualize the Grand and Blessed Supper of the Lord. It is to make the gold of the altar greater than the altar which sanctifieth the gold. [One intemperate word spoken after communion is far worse than any

temperate meal before it. To prove the antiquity of the fasting custom is not to prove either its moral necessity or spiritual usefulness, but merely to prove how sadly soon monastic and pagan notions successfully invaded the inmost shrines of the Christian Church. Two things, at least, are certain in this matter; first, that the Holy Communion was the only service of His own institution in which our Lord Himself took part, that He instituted it in the evening and after Supper; and, secondly, that the Churchmanship of the Church of England is in no way committed exclusively to either early communion or fasting communion. Fasting communion is not even alluded to in the Book of Common Prayer. In the invitation to those about to partake of the Blessed Feast, several indispensable conditions of worthy communicating are recited: earnest repentance, brotherly love, thankfulness, charity, and amendment of life; but no mention whatever is made of fasting. This does not mean that fasting is inadmissible, or that early communions are anti-Scriptural, for, according to the Scripture, the flesh profiteth nothing either way, and spiritual grace is spiritually received without reference to days or times of day. But it does mean that to exclude evening communions from true communions is anti-Scriptural, and that to connect

vitally the feast of sacramental love with fasting from physical food is both anti-Scriptural and anti-Catholic, seeing that large communities of the Church of Christ, and these among the purest and best, the most evidently brooded over by the Holy Ghost, neither require prevenient fasting before sacramentally commemorating the Death and Return of the Lord, nor even encourage it. All these ecclesiastical moralities—if I may so use the term—are part of the vicious process which has been euphemistically described as "the development of doctrine"; but which, in plain words, has for centuries meant little less than the obscuration of the Christ and the destruction of the Catholicity of the Catholic Church. In a living, progressive Church there must, of course, always be going forward the process of development both in the elucidation of doctrine and its application to morals. But it is a condition of all such development, if it is to be true, that it should be in harmony with the laws of its Founder and the teachings of His Authorized Apostles. Otherwise it is a perversion, not a development. Notably is this the case with Christian morals. Evangelical morals, as we find them enunciated in the New Testament, are as sublime in their grandeur as they are magnificent in their simplicity. There is nothing little or narrow about

them, nothing rabbinical, nothing ecclesiastical. They need no casuistry to expound or defend them. Their appeal is to the largest, noblest conscience of mankind. So universal is their appeal that parts of the august evangelical code of morals are to be found embedded in the purest strata of all the great world-religions. And there can never be a Catholic Church, in any honest sense of the term, until we get back to the bed-rock of evangelical morals, which is human love built upon the foundation of love divine and resolutely bent on copying it; and until we get rid of the rabbinical niceties and ecclesiastical subtleties and priestly inventions which have so long usurped the throne properly belonging, and belonging only, to the evangelical morals, whose code was enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount, confirmed in other teachings of the Lord and His Apostles, ratified on the Cross, illuminated at the Resurrection, and made possible to all humanity by the descent at Pentecost. True Churchmanship makes no requirements either in morals or discipline beyond those set forth in the New Testament; but these requirements it demands with a fierce energy. Whosoever does not strive to keep the New Testament Commandments in all their tenderness and power, and does not constantly pray in the Holy Ghost for help so

to do, the truth is not in him. He is both a false Christian and a false Churchman.

This brings me to the last of the notes of true Churchmanship which I have time to lay before you this morning. That note is diversity. The Church of Christ is truly a divine Society. But it is more. It is a divine Body also. Its one Head is in heaven; its one Heart is the Holy Ghost. It has no supreme head upon earth. It would be a deformed, not a divine body, had it two heads. Its only supreme Head, I say, is in heaven. Its various members are partly in Paradise, partly now on earth, partly still unborn. But by all these members alike, whether within the veil or now in their mortal condition, or still in the womb of the future, one characteristic is shared in common. That characteristic is their diversity. Through their one Head the members are all one in purpose, will, and power; through their one Heart they all are one in ideal, inspiration, affection, struggle for the right, resistance to the wrong. They are all one also in their interdependence and mutual service No member can live apart from the Head or apart from the Heart or apart from the other members. The health and strength of each several member, however different it be in form and function from the rest, depends on the health and strength of

all the other members. If one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it; if one be strong, the others share in its strength and rejoice with it. The health and happiness of all depend on the health and happiness of each. Each ministers to all, and all receive either good or ill from each. This is the true fellowship, the true unity of the Christian Church. It is not the identity of inorganic nature, not the uniformity of brick with brick or stone with stone, not the lifeless monotony of drop and drop, shell and shell, but the inward unity of a wonderful and complex organism, a majestic body of diverse members all severally contributing to the vitality and power of the whole. The human body, as fashioned by the Creator, is not one organ, but many; and among its grand characteristics is the marvellous diversity of its organs, their several differences of function, and their co-operant ministry to each other; while all the while their life-blood is flowing from the one Heart and their directing will from the one Head. So also, brethren, is the Church of Christ. A uniform Church would be not only a monotonous, but a dead Church. Diversity is essential to the highest life and the richest growth of the Church. The Catholic Church of Christ is not a nutshell, but a star; yea, a constellation of stars, differing one

from another in glory, but all illuminated by one sun, and all shedding their rays of trembling light on the upward path of human progress.

And what shall we say of the application of these few and brief comments on the grand, cardinal characteristics of the Church of Christ, that Church which, when it returns from its wanderings in far and foreign realms, and from feeding on the husks of ceremonialism and metaphysics, to the Father's home and the Father's feast of simple Sacraments, simple faith and simple words, will find itself the most potent force the ages have ever known for the regeneration and exaltation of humanity, the resistless centre of attraction round which the gathering of all the peoples shall be? I can only allude, and that quite summarily, to two of these practical applications now. First, grand hopes of the reunion of the Christian Church happily fill the air. Reunion is a right noble aim: a holy consummation devoutly to be wished. Brethren, let us strenuously work and earnestly pray for it. But, first of all, as an indispensable preliminary, let us try to understand with something like precision what we mean by it. Do we mean that the Greek Church shall adopt the *filioque* clause in order to be united with the Italian Church, or that the Italian Church shall abandon the clause for the sake of reunion

with the Greek Church? Do we mean that the Italian Curia shall abandon its pontifical assumption of world-wide ecclesiastical despotism, which it set up even before the days of Hildebrand, for the sake of reunion with the reformed Churches; or that the reformed Churches shall accept the Tridentine and Vatican decrees for the sake of union with Rome? Do we mean that all Presbyterians and other non-Episcopal Communities shall accept Episcopacy, not only as a form of government, but as a covenanted channel of ministerial grace; or that Episcopalians—some of whom set a kind of sacramental store by Episcopacy, and all of whom value it as a priceless historic witness and chain of the continuity of the Church—shall content themselves with the Presbyteral form of government and ministry? Do we mean in the matchless Pauline phrase that the whole body shall be a foot, or a hand, or an ear, or an eye, or a nose? It is, I repeat, of supreme moment, brethren, on the threshold of this great movement, that we should pause and consider what we clearly and definitely mean by it. For myself I should be more than content, yea, unspeakably thankful, that we should proceed slowly; that, as a first step, all Methodists should be united in one body, all Presbyterians in one body, all reformed Episcopalians in one

body—that the Roman Church should set about the vigorous emancipation of itself from corruption and error, and the Greek Church from the hidebound fetters of deadening tradition and spiritual immobility—and that there should be more frequent interchange of religious and social intercouse between the members of all the several Christian communities ; not as yet an interchange of pulpits, but united meetings for conversation, discussion, prayer, and praise. Whether or not in the long procession of the suns the possibility of corporate reunion will ever lift itself above the horizon of dream-mists into the clear firmament of practical affairs I cannot even surmise. But one thing I know, the time has come, unless the world is to be lost to Christ, that Christians of all denominations should tear out from their hearts every root of bitterness and hostility to each other, and should confess openly and sincerely that, whatever be a man's denomination, if he names the name of Christ and departs from iniquity and does righteous service for his fellows, that man is a true Catholic Churchman, a member of the great body of which Christ is the Head and the Holy Ghost the Life.

Lastly, the realization of the true character of the Christian Church has a direct and immediate bearing on the question of Disestablishment.

Establishment is not of the essence of a Church. The Churches of the New Testament were none of them Established Churches. The great majority of the Churches of Christendom to-day are not Established Churches. There are many things to be said on both sides of this question of Establishment which may be said both wisely and worthily if said without bitterness and in honest search of truth. There is only one of these many things which at present I have time to say. It is this: you cannot have a national Church unless that Church be established. The Church of a nation, if it is to assume a national character, must, I think, be in clear and close relationship with the nation, and must exercise national functions. It must be the religious embodiment of the nation's life, the evidence of its belief in God, the mouthpiece and standard of its worship, the breath of its morals, the guide of its progress, and without respect of persons its bond of religious brotherhood. You can have religious brotherhoods, spiritual societies, within a nation without the establishment of any; but I do not think you can have any single Church, including and representing the whole religious life and action of a nation, unless some integral relationship be established between that Church and that nation.

There are many, I know, who object to the

very idea of national Churches. The papacy objects to them both on ecclesiastical and governmental grounds, except as provincial departments of its own imperial system. Many Christians object to them because they think a nation is a secular, and a Church a spiritual, entity. They object to the interposition of Parliament, composed as it is now, in the direction and administration of ecclesiastical affairs. I acknowledge these objections, and appreciate them ; and yet I cling to the grand conception of a national Church, a national recognition of God, a national allegiance to Christ, a nation's inspiration by the Holy Ghost. I have no love for the distinction, amounting to a practical severance, if not an antagonism, between things secular and sacred, ecclesiastical and civil, mundane and religious. I believe that this distinction lies at the root of much rottenness both in the affairs of the State and the conduct of the Churches at the present day. I believe that if the State were really more religious, and the Church hallowed all things secular, there would in a few generations be such progress in the justice and joyousness, the beauty and sweetness, the goodness and ascent of human life, as the world as yet has never seen. If a man considers his body merely as a secular and material thing, and his soul only as sacred and godlike, that man's

religion, from the standpoint of the Gospel, is vain. It is only when every part of him, body, soul, and spirit, is combined in one harmony of consecration to God and service of his fellows, that any man's religion is worthy of the title Christian. Similarly with State and Church. If the State pays no homage to religion, and religion has neither national influence nor national voice in State affairs, then for me, at least, neither religion nor State has that fulness and richness of ideal and elevating power which is their Christian birthright and proper due. I believe God cares for States as well as Churches; that He is as willing to inspire and direct Parliaments or County Councils as Convocations or Conferences, or Synods or General Assemblies. I believe that Christ died to save nations as well as Churches; that our secular things, like our bodies, have a spiritual value, and ought to be hallowed; that in every nation there ought to be a national Church, as the expression and representation of that nation's allegiance and devotion to God.

But what are the main hindrances to the existence and firm establishment of national Churches throughout the world? Limiting myself in a few concluding words to our own Church of England, and especially to that branch of it in the beautiful and historic principality of Wales,

why should this branch be disestablished, denationalized? Every true Welshman is proud of the long history of the Church in Wales: its lineage as old as, if not older than, that of any other branch of the Anglican Church, its splendid rôle of saints and spiritual heroes, its devotion to the Bible (from Wales sprang the Bible Society, the greatest of all Missionary Societies), its glorious company of Evangelical teachers and preachers. The vivid Celtic imagination, the warm glow of Welsh loyalty and Welsh patriotism, of Welsh piety and religious fervour, must burn with exceeding brightness, as it dwells on the ancient, splendid connection of the Welsh people and the Welsh Church. And why should that connection be now dissolved? There have, doubtless, been periods during which the Church in Wales deserved to be disestablished: times of miserable dereliction of duty, of arrogant class prejudice, of spiritual deadness—times to be mourned and wept over by all true Christians. But those times are not now. The Episcopal Church in Wales to-day is acknowledged on all hands to be a living, loving, self-sacrificing Church, using its endowments to the highest advantage, devoted to education, caring for the poor, ministering to the sick, faithfully preaching the Gospel of redemption and immortality. Why should Nonconform-

ing Christians desire to disestablish such a Church at such a time? Why rather should they not draw nearer to it in Christian fellowship and brotherly love? The differences between the Episcopal Church and the Nonconforming Churches are not great either in Creed or Sacrament, in moral code or spiritual aspiration. The greatest difference between them lies in their modes of worship and the value they severally attach to Episcopacy. The former of these differences is by no means insurmountable, because in every national Church there must always be a large diversity of forms and worship to meet the tastes and suit the temperaments of all; and the latter of these differences will, I am persuaded, grow less with the growth of knowledge and the spread of spiritual enlightenment; for it is impossible that the much vexed question of Episcopacy can long remain in its present unsettled and injurious state.

Meanwhile, in place of the cry for disestablishment, may we not substitute the ideal of a real national Church, with Gospel Creeds, Gospel Sacraments, Gospel morals, Gospel brotherhood? Instead of political meetings for misrepresenting and attacking each other, might we not have gatherings for learning to understand and trust each other? Let Churchmen and Noncon-

formists alike daily pray against bitterness in others, and chiefly in themselves. Above all, let them pray earnestly, lest they should do anything contrary to the brotherhood of men or the glory of God. If this be done by all men, everywhere, and at all times, then shall it come to pass in the last days, if not in ours, that the true Universal Church of Christ shall be established on the top of all partial Churches, and shall be exalted above all sects and all denominations; and every national Church shall flow unto it.

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